



Acton-Boxborough Regional
School Committee Meeting

March 17, 2016

7:00 p.m. Business Meeting
7:30 Fy17 School Choice Public Hearing
Followed by remainder of Business Meeting

at the R.J. Grey Junior High Library

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

March 17, 2016
7:00 p.m. Business Meeting begins
7:30 p.m. ABRSC School Choice Public Hearing
Followed by remainder of Business Meeting

AGENDA

1. **Chairman's Introduction (7:00)**
 - 1.1. Annual Spring Town Elections (*Acton on 3/29, Boxborough on 5/16*)
 - 1.2. Thank you to Michael Coppolino for 18 Years of AB School Committee Service
2. **Statement of Warrant & Approval of Minutes**
 - 2.1. ABRSC Meetings of 3/3/16 and 11/19/15
3. **Public Participation**
4. **ABRSC SCHOOL CHOICE PUBLIC HEARING (7:30)**
 - 4.1. School Choice Hearing Memo – *Marie Altieri*
 - 4.2. Participation in School Choice Program 2016-2017 – **VOTE** – *Glenn Brand*
5. **ABRSD FY17 Budget Update– *Glenn Brand (oral) (7:40)***
6. **Excess & Deficiency (E&D) Certification, 6/30/15 – *Clare Jeannotte (7:45)***
7. **Regional Financial Oversight Committee (RFOC) Annual Report per Regional Agreement – *Clare Jeannotte (7:50)***
 - 7.1. Calculation of FY15 Per Pupil Expenditures by School
 - 7.2. Elementary Schools (per the Regional Agreement)
 - 7.3. Recommendation to Approve Regional Financial Oversight Committee Statement to be Read at Annual Town Meetings - **VOTE** – *Mary Brolin*
8. **Town Meeting Preparation – *Kristina Rychlik (oral) (8:05)***
9. **ABRSD Capital Study Update – *Glenn Brand (8:10)***
 - 9.1. Link to materials: <http://www.abschools.org/district/school-capital-and-space-planning>
 - 9.2. Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Statement of Interest Application Process
 - 9.2.1. Required Form of Vote to Submit a Statement of Interest
 - 9.2.2. Core Program Statement of Interest Process Overview
 - 9.3. Recommendation to Approve Statement of Interest – *Vote to be taken at ABRSC meeting on 4/4/16 prior to Acton Town Meeting*
 - 9.4. Working Group and Visioning Team Membership
 - 9.5. School Capital & Space Planning Community Meeting Flyer, 3/29/16, 7:00 p.m. in the Douglas School Cafeteria
10. **Recommendation regarding ABRSD Legal Resources – **VOTE** - *Glenn Brand (8:25)***
11. **ABRSC Draft Letter to Commissioner Chester re Conflict between DESE's Recommendation for March Vacation Week & Standardized Testing Schedules – *Maya Minkin, Kathleen Neville (Draft letter is unchanged from last meeting) (8:30)***

12. **Demographic Survey Update** – *Mary Brolin, Michael Coppolino (oral) (8:40)*

13. **FY17 Kindergarten Registration Update** – *Marie Altieri (oral) (8:45)*

14. **Subcommittee Reports** (8:50)

14.1. Budget – *Maria Neyland (oral)*

14.1.1. Meeting on 3/16/16

14.2. Policy –

14.2.1. **Public’s Right to Know**, File: KDB – Second Reading – **VOTE** - *Brigid Bieber*

14.2.2. **School Committee Legal Status**, File: BB – Second Reading – **VOTE** - *Brigid Bieber*

14.3. Legislative – *Kathleen Neville*

14.3.1. Recommendation to Adopt the Resolution Calling for Full Funding of the Foundation Budget Review Commission's Recommendations as proposed by the Suburban Coalition, 2/1/16 – **VOTE** – *Kristina Rychlik*

14.3.1.1. Updated Resolution and List of Communities in Support (3/1/16)

14.3.2. Proposed Letter Rep. Jennifer Benson re Governor’s Budget, *Paul Murphy*

14.4. Comparative Communities Study Update – *Michael Coppolino*

14.4.1. ABRSC Member to replace M. Coppolino as Subcommittee Chair

15. **School Committee Member Reports** (9:00)

15.1. Acton Leadership Group (ALG) – *Kristina Rychlik, Paul Murphy*

15.1.1. Minutes of meeting on 2/25/16

15.1.2. Materials from meeting on 3/15/16

15.2. Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) – *Maria Neyland*

15.3. Health Insurance Trust (HIT)– *Mary Brolin*

15.4. Acton Finance Committee – *Kristina Rychlik, Deanne O’Sullivan*

15.5. Acton Board of Selectmen – *Mike Coppolino*

15.6. Boxborough Finance Committee- *Mary Brolin*

15.7. Boxborough Board of Selectmen – *Maria Neyland, Brigid Bieber*

15.8. Minuteman Technical High School (MMT) Update – *Diane Baum*

15.9. PTO/PTSO/PTF Co-Chairs– *Deanne O’Sullivan*

16. **Superintendent’s Report/Updates** – *Glenn Brand (9:10)*

16.1. MASS/MASBO School Finance Position Paper, 3/10/16

17. **FOR YOUR INFORMATION**

17.1. ABRHS Discipline Report 3/1/16

17.2. RJGJHS Discipline Report 3/1/16

17.3. Monthly Student Enrollment, 3/1/16

17.4. ELL Student Population by School, 3/1/16

17.5. Annual Town Meeting Budget Book – Superintendent Message, Summary by Character Code and Table 6 (*Book available March 24*)

17.6. Family Learning Series: “*Celebrating Aha Moments*”, Melissa Stewart on 3/23/15 at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr High School

17.7. DESE Published FY15 Per Pupil Expenses

17.8. ABRSD Financial Reports as of 2/29/16

17.8.1. Revenue vs Budget

17.8.2. Expenses vs Budget

17.8.3. Special Revenue

17.8.4. Grants

17.9. Kid Friendly Movie Night at Acton Town Meeting, 4/4/16 and 4/5/16

16. **Adjourn** (9:15)

NEXT MEETINGS:

March 29 School Capital and Space Planning Community Meeting, 7:00 p.m., Douglas School Cafeteria with Superintendent Glenn Brand and Facilities Director J.D. Head

April 4 Acton Town Meeting begins, 7:00 p.m. in the ABRHS Auditorium (ABRSC Meeting at 6:15 p.m. in High School Room XX for possible **VOTE** on MSBA Statement of Interest) Warrant found at <http://www.acton-ma.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/7840>

April 7 ABRSC Executive Session (*Strategy with respect to collective bargaining*) at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr High Library

April 28 ABRSC Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr High Library

May 9 Boxborough Town Meeting begins, 7:00 p.m. in the Blanchard Gym

May 19 ABRSC Meeting at 7:00 p.m. in the Jr High Library

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

March 3, 2016
7:00 p.m.
Followed by Executive Session

Members Present: Diane Baum, Brigid Bieber, Mary Brolin, Michael Coppolino, Maya Minkin, Kathleen Neville, Maria Neyland, Deanne O’Sullivan, Kristina Rychlik
Members Absent: Amy Krishnamurthy, Paul Murphy
Others: Marie Altieri, Bonnie Bisbicos, Deborah Bookis, Clare Jeannotte, Glenn Brand, Beth Petr

Chairwoman Kristina Rychlik called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. **Chairman’s Introduction**

2. **Statement of Warrant & Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the ABRSC Meetings of 2/11/16 and 11/5/15 were approved as amended. Warrant #16-017PR dated 2/18/16 in the amount of \$2,333,670.47, warrant #16-018 dated 2/25/16 in the amount of \$1,701,753.52 and warrant #16-018PR dated 3/3/16 in the amount of \$1,771,766.17 were signed by the Committee.

3. **Public Participation - none**

4. **Kelley’s Corner Improvement Plan Presentation** – *Andrew Brockway, Chair, Acton 2020 and Kelley’s Corner Improvement Steering Committee*

Mr. Brockway presented the proposed plan, emphasizing that given its proximity to the school campus, the School Committee should stay informed. Acton Town Meeting in April will ask voters to support funding for design work. Two goals are to improve traffic flow, and provide safe and social connections for walkers and bikers. Analysis of the Kmart quadrant site at full allowable residential build-out suggests a one-time increase of 20-70 students. Direct construction costs are estimated at \$9-12 million with funding possible from the state and federal government. Total design costs are \$756,000, with 25% MA DOT funding of \$318,000 anticipated, leaving final design completion of \$438,000. This is what the Town of Acton will be asked to vote on. The School Committee appreciated the presentation.

5. **Change to 2016 ABRSD Summer School Course Preview Practice** – *Deborah Bookis*

Deborah Bookis described the increase in the number of students who are taking a course before they take it at the High School (“previewing”). The Administrators reviewed what was happening, including the mathematics classes in particular. In support of ABRSD’s commitment to the emotional well-being of all students and staff, previewing AB Summer School classes will no longer be permitted. Ms. Bookis also said that the math placement test given at the end of 6th grade will no longer be administered. She stressed that these teachers know their students and have a lot of data on each one so they are confident about placing them for future classes without this test at the end of 6th grade. The Administrators reviewed how this change to summer school would affect the program’s revenue and consider it a “negligible” loss. There may be some pushback from parents who want their children to take the summer school classes, but the Administration will stress what is best for kids.

6. **Minuteman Technical High School (MMT) Update** – *Glenn Brand*

Dr. Brand reviewed the results of Boxborough's Special Town Meeting on 2/24/16, where the Town chose to withdraw from the Minuteman Technical Regional School District. The ABRSD intends to continue the current Minuteman Tech classes offered at the Jr High as they are very popular. The Administration will do whatever is needed to provide our Boxborough students with information about their High School options.

7. **Assistant Superintendent of Student Services Search Decision**

7.1. Recommendation to Appoint Dr. Dawn G. Bentley, Ed.D. as Assistant Superintendent of Student Services – **VOTE** – *Glenn Brand*

Dr. Brand reviewed the process that led up to his recommendation of Dr. Bentley for this position. He thanked Marie Altieri for handling the job search so well. After reviewing comparative data, he feels a salary of \$138,000 is a fair starting point.

Michael Coppolino suggested that for future reference, the years of service that a candidate has been in a position would be another important data point to consider regarding salary levels. Brigid Bieber asked where AB falls in the comparative data. Dr. Brand answered that because the data is from FY14 (the most recent data on the DESE website), and that is prior to AB's K-12 regionalization, our data is not included. It was suggested that the data be sorted by salary in the table.

Mary Brolin moved, Maria Neyland seconded and it was unanimously,
VOTED: to approve the hiring of Dr. Dawn Bentley as Assistant Superintendent for Student Services at a salary of \$138,000 effective July 1, 2016.

7.2. Director of Special Education Update

Mary Emmons has accepted a new position so the District is moving forward with a search to replace her. There is a very thin pool for this type of position.

8. **ABRSD Capital Study Update** – *Glenn Brand*

8.1. Link to posted materials: <http://www.abschools.org/district/school-capital-and-space-planning>

8.2. Memo and 2016 Existing Conditions Study Capital Improvement Plan

8.3. Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Statement of Interest – **First Read**

Brigid Bieber noted that at Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF), they discussed the study briefly and it was unanimous that the BLF members wanted the District to apply and get on the state's funding list. Mary Brolin is confident that the District should submit the statement of interest now. Kristina Rychlik emphasized that the District needs to communicate clearly and often with our Towns' Boards and residents to build awareness and understanding of the issues.

8.4. Request for School Committee members for the Visioning Team Workshops

8.5. Invitation for Non-School Community members to Join Visioning Team Workshops

Dr. Brand described the Working Group and Visioning Team again. Brigid Bieber is the Boxborough School Committee member on the Working Group (joining Amy Krishnamurthy and Maya Minkin). Kathleen Neville is the Boxborough member on the Visioning Team along with Maya Minkin. One more Acton Committee member is needed. The first of the three Visioning Team workshops will be on March 18.

9. **Comparative Communities Study Proposal** – *Michael Coppolino*

Kristina Rychlik began by stating that after discussions at several meetings, the Committee needs to decide if Michael's proposal is something that the Committee agrees to. Maria Neyland noted that the

people who have agreed to work with Mike on this are very capable, and she thinks the group could accomplish quite a bit but she is not convinced it is the right time to commit to it. She advocated for waiting until the summer. She looked at the Committee's current goals and stated that they are working on most of them, but the demographic study has a lot of work left to do. She does not want to start something new, particularly given that it would require some assistance from the Administration. She said that when the Committee has a big project, unless it is an emergency, it usually is added to the July workshop. She asked if this could be a School Committee subcommittee if no School Committee member is on it, given that Michael's term ends on April 5th. She emphasized that the activity is not just gathering information, there has to be a clear goal or target. Kristina Rychlik agreed with Maria and is also concerned about progress on the demographic study.

Mike Coppolino expressed frustration that he has a group of people ready to start working and the Committee wants them to wait. He stated that he would probably not want to do this after his term ended.

Kristina gave the example of the class size subcommittee that she was a member of before being on School Committee and there were concerns. She would want this new group to be structured to make good use of people's time. Brigid Bieber questioned how much progress could be made before Mike retires. She suggested that there may be a few data points that could be looked at, but the group may not be able to do all of the deep dives that they'd like. She suggested focusing on the regional schools for a better comparison.

Kristina prefers to postpone the activity until the July workshop and asked the Committee for their comments. Mary Brolin agreed with Brigid stating that it is fine if they collect data, but there is no commitment from School Committee on what to do with it. Kristina expressed concern about how much staff time it might take, so it may need a better charge and structure. Mike acknowledged that the volunteers are all "fairly savvy" people who have volunteered extensively and know how to do deep data dives. He would follow the protocol and go through Beth Petr to ask Clare Jeannotte if her assistance is needed. He is not talking about a line by line review, but is looking for a way to possibly improve the District's budgeting by comparing other towns' data.

Regarding the demographic survey project, Mike stated that the Boston College professors are taking the lead now. More meetings will be scheduled, but there is not a lot of heavy lifting to do for a while.

Diane Baum stated that doing this comparison work now will give the District more data to make a decision with in the summer. Deanne O'Sullivan agreed. Dr. Brand agreed that the ability for us to look at data from other districts can lead to good insights, depending on the timeline. He has some concern for what Clare Jeannotte and her department might be asked to do, timewise, because they have been working on so many projects, especially with closing out the budget.

Clare Jeannotte has no issues about data gathering, but the conclusions that could be drawn from the data without being careful are what concern her. She would want to see the data and how it had been gathered. She might have some insight about the District's own numbers that Mike and this group would need to know. She does not know the particulars about other communities' numbers.

The Committee discussed whether or not this should be a new subcommittee of the School Committee. Mike felt the results would have more credibility if they were a subcommittee. Kristina asked if anyone on the School Committee wanted to serve on this subcommittee, but there were no volunteers. It was the sense of the Committee that the subcommittee would move forward and a School Committee member would be found after Mike's term is up. Beth Petr reminded the Committee that the Open Meeting Law requirements must be met if they are a subcommittee.

10. **Response to Citizen’s Request for School Committee Position re Testing – Kristina Rychlik**

- 10.1. Memo from K Rychlik re Committee’s Possible Response, 2/26/16
- 10.2. ABRSC Statement Read at Acton Special Town Meeting on 11/10/15
- 10.3. Comments from ABRSC Chairwoman at Acton Special Town Meeting on 11/10/15
- 10.4. Excerpt from 11/19/15 ABRSC Meeting Draft Minutes
- 10.5. Email Regarding MCAS Participation for Spring 2016, *Deborah Bookis*, 2/12/16
- 10.6. ABRSD Administrative Statement on Standardized Testing, *September 2015*
- 10.7. Emails from Citizen re “Non-binding Resolution Official Response”, 2/4/16

Kristina summarized that the Committee has made their position clear as documented above. Kristina asked the Committee if they are in support, as she is, of Deborah Bookis’ email to the Principals on 2/12/16 (#10.5) regarding MCAS participation in Spring 2016. The Committee agreed that an official statement does not seem to make sense regarding the state actions. When asked if this could be the Committee’s official response, there was no comment which was understood to be agreement.

11. **Subcommittee Reports**

11.1. Budget – *Maria Neyland*

At the meeting on 3/2/16, they continued reviewing the FY17 budget. Next meeting is 3/16.

11.2. Regional Financial Oversight (RFOC) – *Mary Brolin*

At the meeting on 3/3/16, they reviewed Clare Jeannotte’s per pupil cost calculations and it will be on agenda for the 3/17/16 School Committee meeting. The tracking sheet of savings for FY15,16 and17 shows about a million savings a year, with all favorable trends. They drafted a statement for Town Meeting, to be read by Mike Coppolino, that will be in School Committee packet for the next meeting. An Acton member will be needed for this group to replace Mike.

11.3. Policy –

11.3.1. **Physical Restraint of Students**, File: JKAA – Second Read - **VOTE** – *Brigid Bieber*

11.3.1.1. Procedures and Current Policy

Mary Brolin moved, Maria Neyland seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to accept the revisions to the Physical Restraint of Students policy, File: JKAA as proposed.

11.3.2. **Public’s Right to Know**, File: KDB – First Reading – *Brigid Bieber*

11.3.3. **School Committee Legal Status**, File: BB – First Reading – *Brigid Bieber*

Comments on either of these policies should be sent to Brigid or Beth.

11.4. Outreach – *Kathleen Neville*

Kathleen has FY17 Budget handouts for members going to PTO meetings and she will get them to Beth for copies to be made.

11.5. Legislative – *Kathleen Neville*

11.5.1. Discussion of Suburban Coalition’s Resolution dated 2/1/16

11.5.1.1. Updated Resolution and List of Communities in Support (3/1/16) **First Read**

Kathleen Neville described the Resolution, it includes Boards of Selectmen and Finance Committees as well as School Committees which makes it stronger. Mary Brolin and Diane Baum think this is a great idea. A vote will be taken at the next School Committee meeting.

11.5.2. Proposed Letter Rep. Jennifer Benson re Governor’s Budget

Kathleen Neville asked if the Committee liked Paul Murphy’s draft. Comments should be sent to Paul. It will be included in the next meeting’s packet.

12. **School Committee Member Reports**

12.1. Acton Leadership Group (ALG) – *Kristina Rychlik, Paul Murphy*

12.1.1. Minutes of meeting on 2/9/16

12.1.2. Materials from meeting on 2/25/16

The Boards are being asked to consider the Acton Finance Committee's compromise plan. Kristina feels it is too early to consider making changes per this plan.

12.1.3. Charge of the Town of Acton Capital Improvement Planning Committee, 1/28/16

Kristina asked who will represent the School Committee on this new Committee. The School Committee is also permitted to designate an at-large community member for this committee. This will be on the next meeting agenda.

12.2. Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF)

Mary Brolin reported that BLF met last night. As soon as they receive the updated sheet for the budget and warrant articles, Mary will send it. They approved the ABRSD budget.

12.3. Health Insurance Trust (HIT)

Mary Brolin reported that HIT met last Friday and voted a 4% increase in rates.

12.4. Acton Finance Committee

Kristina Rychlik reported that they met 2/23/16 and discussed the compromise plan again.

12.5. Acton Board of Selectmen

The ABRSD FY17 budget will be voted on at the meeting next Monday night.

12.6. Boxborough Finance Committee

Mary Brolin reported that they met on Monday. Clare and Glenn joined them for the budget discussion. They approved the FY17 school budget.

12.7. PTO/PTSO/PTF Co-Chairs– *next meeting is March 31.*

13. Superintendent's Report/Updates –

Dr. Brand highlighted several of the FYI items. Dr. Brand held the second of his two Community Meetings recently in the Acton Memorial Library. The Interschool Council met on 3/1/16. There will be one more meeting this year. The School Capital and Space Planning group met last week. Katherine Contini (aka Kate McMillan) has been nominated as a semifinalist for the MA Teacher of the Year Award from Blanchard.

Kristina Rychlik noted how special the Annual Chair Ceremony Honoring Staff with 20 Years of Service to the District is. The Committee is invited to attend on 3/30/16.

14. EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 9:00 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously,

VOTED by role call: that the **Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee** go into Executive Session to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the Office Support Association (OSA), American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and Acton-Boxborough Education Association (ABEA).

(YES – Baum, Bieber, Brolin, Coppolino, Minkin, Neville, Neyland, O'Sullivan, Rychlik)

Kristina Rychlik stated that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the Board and the Committee would return to open session solely to adjourn.

The ABRSC returned to Open Session at 9:47 p.m. and adjourned at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of Documents Used: see agenda

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE (ABRSC) MEETING
DRAFT MINUTES

Library
R.J. Grey Junior High School

November 19, 2015
7:00 p.m.
Followed by Executive Session

Members Present: Diane Baum, Brigid Bieber (8:40 p.m.), Mary Brolin, Michael Coppolino, Amy Krishnamurthy, Maya Minkin, Paul Murphy, Kathleen Neville, Maria Neyland, Deanne O'Sullivan (7:10 p.m.), Kristina Rychlik

Members Absent: none

Others: Marie Altieri, Bonnie Bisbicos, Deborah Bookis, Glenn Brand, Clare Jeannotte, Beth Petr

1. The ABRSC was called to order at 7:01 p.m. by Chairwoman Kristina Rychlik.

2. **Chairman's Introduction**

3. **Statement of Warrant**

Warrant # 16-010PR dated 11/12/15 in the amount of \$1,985,900.68 and warrant #16-011 dated 11/19/15 in the amount of \$2,058,964.13 were signed by the Committee members.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting on 11/10/15 were approved as written. Minutes of 11/5/15 will be voted at the next meeting.

5. **Public Participation - none**

6. **Existing Conditions Study Report Update from Dore & Whittier – Glenn Brand, JD Head**

Dr. Brand introduced the first progress presentation from Dore and Whittier. In December or January, the Committee will receive a comprehensive 500 page report. Lee Dore, principal of the firm, reported that his team has been through all nine of the school buildings. They are now reviewing all of the data and organizing it into line item budgets for the capital improvements proposal. This plan will be prioritized by school over time, based on current state regulations. Lee noted that our District's focus on energy conservation is to be commended.

In Summary:

- Buildings overall are solidly constructed and well maintained.
- Buildings in most need of improvements are ones that have not had additions or renovations:
 - Administration Building (built in 1957)
 - Douglas (built in 1965)
 - Gates (built in 1967)
 - Conant (built in 1970)
- Codes and regulations have changed considerably since the older buildings have been constructed.
- A considerable investment will be required and that is not even to address educational needs. (Phase 2 will address educational needs.)

Questions from the Committee:

Lee confirmed that there are no sprinklers in some buildings, because they are grandfathered. There will be code triggers about this when work begins. Modularity was not taken into account because they are considered temporary. Lee offered to reassess including the modular rooms if the Committee desired.

Dr. Brand thanked the presenters emphasizing that this is a multi-year endeavor. The State and its MA State Building Authority (MSBA) grant program will also have an effect on the timeline. If successful, they would offset some of the costs, but it would trigger some code issues.

The options will become clearer as Phase 2 (“Educational Visioning and Master Plan Development”) progresses. Dr. Brand noted that the District has not committed any funding yet for the Phase 2 work. Part 1 is funded in the FY16 budget, and the plan was that Phase 2 would be incorporated into the FY17 budget. Dr. Brand advocated for moving forward more quickly on the study. He asked the School Committee if Phase 2 should be accelerated now to prevent a 5 or 6 month lag in learning what our options are. He pointed out that there is great interest at the town level on capital. He asked the Committee to consider exploring what Phase 2 funding might look like. The Request For Proposal (RFP) has been structured so that the District does not have to go out to bid for Phase 2. Dr. Brand will continue this discussion at a future meeting.

7. FY17 Fees Review/Recommendations Presentation –First Read - Glenn Brand

7.1. Athletics – Steve Martin

ABRSD Athletic Director Steve Martin presented on his programs’ fees. He proposed an increase to next year’s athletic fee of \$45. Sports that have an initial cost like ski, hockey and gymnastics would charge an additional \$250. He proposed a family cap of \$1,500 per year.

This is needed due to salary increases, the FY11 Budget cut of \$71,930, decrease in participants, increase in transportation costs and a decrease in gate receipts. This has resulted in the past four consecutive years ending with a deficit in his budget, despite cost saving/revenue generating attempts. He expects, at this time, for FY16 to end in a deficit as well, of approximately \$60,000. Steve has surveyed other communities and because there are so many ways to handle these expenses, it is difficult to compare the fees.

Mike Coppolino reminded the Committee that a few years ago they talked about cutting some 7th grade sports. Also many schools don’t have 7th grade teams so it is sometimes hard for AB to field ours. There are other basketball programs that kids could play (so perhaps we don’t have to keep all of our teams), compared to field hockey where there are not many other options to play that sport, so AB would keep all of their teams. He also suggested that some teams seem to change uniforms more often than might be necessary, and some savings might be found that way.

Paul Murphy asked if the Projected Gate revenue included use of the track for large events. Steve replied that it did not because the District would charge a minimal charge for its use, but money is made from the concessions. Steve clarified that concessions revenue usually goes to the boosters’ clubs. The Lions Club runs concessions for football games.

Mary Brolin noted that the running deficit seemed parallel to the cuts done in 2011, so maybe those cuts were not right. Deanne O’Sullivan asked why more has not been done to encourage corporate sponsors. Steve pointed out that Dr. Mills tried to encourage this idea but it did not take off, other than our traditional, very generous, current sponsors. When asked if he attributed the lower participation to the fees and changes in enrollment, Steve replied that he thought it was more due to changes in demographics and culture. Deanne O’Sullivan was concerned about the new family max. Mary Brolin appreciated that Steve is offering more assistance to families who are on waivers.

Maya Minkin asked if Steve had considered increasing the annual fee more to make the bottom line work out better. As a new Athletic Director, Steve said he is still trying to understand how things work in the department and did not feel right going any higher at this time. Maria Neyland cautioned about increasing the fee more because athletes' families are also paying a lot for equipment and fundraising every year.

Kristina Rychlik suggested that some of the items could be capital issues that may be considered differently. She agreed with increasing the family cap and helping those families that need financial assistance. Mike Coppolino advocated strongly for consideration of ending the girls and boys 7th grade basketball teams. He also thought it might be worth looking into corporate sponsorship again. Maya Minkin advocated strongly against cutting any 7th grade teams because she considers it an important feature in our towns. Deanne O'Sullivan disagreed with the increase because most families will not hit the family cap of \$1500.

The Committee will be asked to vote at their next meeting. If there are no changes, approximately \$70,000 will come from the budget to cover the deficit if the year ends with one.

7.2. Kindergarten – *Erin Bettez*

Erin Bettez recommended a tuition increase from \$4,300 to \$4,500 for next year. The hybrid method (a mix of all day and half day students) is good because it gives more choice to more families. It has been in place for a long time at Blanchard. Next year we will have two classrooms of hybrids.

7.3. ABRSD Early Childhood Program – *Joe Gibowicz*

The All Day Program fee would be unchanged for next year - \$3,530 for Half Day and \$6,830 for All Day. Joe Gibowicz provided comparisons with other communities' rates.

7.4. Occupational Development Program (ODP) – *Mary Emmons*

This rate did not change from FY15 to FY16. It is proposed that the rate increase 2% for FY17 to address staffing salary increases. Presently the Program has 16 students with 2 from out of district.

8. **Potential Solar Net Metering Agreement Overview** – *JD Head*

JD Head explained this new possibility for energy cost savings. Net metering is a system in which solar panels or other renewable energy generators are connected to a public-utility power grid (Nstar via the NEMA load zone) and surplus power is transferred onto the grid, allowing customers to offset the cost of power drawn from the utility. Acton's Land Fill is an example of net metering. Financial risk revolves around the cost of electricity and how much electricity the District consumes. The Committee had questions about the complicated technical aspects of this proposal. JD will meet with anyone who needs more details next week. He will bring more information to the School Committee meeting on 12/3/15. He hopes the Committee will vote to approve the proposal at that time.

9. **FY17 ABRSD School Calendar – Second Reading – VOTE** - *Glenn Brand, Marie Altieri*

9.1. School Year/School Calendar, Policy File: IC/ICA

9.2. Staff Survey Results

9.3. Draft FY17 Proposed Calendar (no change from 11/5/15 meeting)

Maria Neyland stated that she would not vote for this proposal because it observes religious holidays and she has not agreed with this for the 8 years that she has been on the Committee. As in the past, she stated that having only two religions' holidays as no school is wrong. She feels the District is ignoring the changes in demographics in our community, and is offended by this. She also feels that the High School students need all the school days they can get to prepare for AP tests. Mike Coppolino stated that having school on Tuesday, October 11, with no school the days before and after, is "silly".

Mary Brolin moved, Deanne O’Sullivan seconded and it was,

VOTED: to approve the FY17 ABRSD School Calendar changes as proposed.

(YES: Baum, Bieber, Brolin, Coppolino, Krishnamurthy, Minkin, Murphy, Neville, O’Sullivan , Rychlik NO: Neyland)

10. **Financial Reports** – *Clare Jeannotte*

- 10.1. 1st Quarter FY16 Financial Report
- 10.2. Foundation Budget Review Commission Report, 10/30/15
- 10.3. Recommendation to Accept Grant from Toshiba America Foundation to ABRHS –
VOTE – *Glenn Brand*

Clare Jeannotte reported. Kathleen Neville asked why the cost of nurse monitors falls on the district. Bonnie Bisbicos explained that the District has an unusually high number of students this year with this need in their educational plan.

Mary Brolin moved, Mike Coppolino seconded and it was unanimously,

VOTED: to accept this grant from Toshiba to ABRHS.

11. **MASC District Governance Program Update** – *Kristina Rychlik*

Given the late hour, the Committee decided to postpone this item to their next meeting.

- 11.1. Recommendation to Approve ABRSC Goals – **Second Reading** – **VOTE**
- 11.2. Final Workshop on January 6 at 7:00 p.m.

12. **Subcommittee Reports**

Given the late hour, the Committee decided to postpone these items to their next meeting.

- 12.1. Budget – *Maria Neyland (oral)*
- 12.2. Policy –
 - 12.2.1. **School Councils**, File: BDFA – **Second Read** – **VOTE** - *Glenn Brand*
 - 12.2.1.1. Procedures: School Improvement Plan, BDFA-R-1, Submission and Approval of the School Improvement Plan, BDFA-R-2, Conduct of School Council Business, BDFA-E-3
 - 12.2.2. **New School Committee Member Orientation**, File: BIA – **Second Read** – **VOTE** -
Kathleen Neville
- 12.3. Demographic Study Update – *Mike Coppolino (oral)*
- 12.4. Legislative – *Paul Murphy (oral)*

13. **School Committee Member Reports**

Given the late hour, the Committee decided to postpone these items to their next meeting.

- 13.1. Acton Leadership Group (ALG) – *Kristina Rychlik, Paul Murphy*
 - 13.1.1. Meeting minutes - 10/29/15
- 13.2. Boxborough Leadership Forum (BLF) – *Maria Neyland (3 Board Meeting on 11/30/15)*
- 13.3. Health Insurance Trust (HIT)– *Mary Brolin*
- 13.4. Acton Finance Committee – *Kristina Rychlik, Deanne O’Sullivan*
- 13.5. Acton Board of Selectmen – *Mike Coppolino, Paul Murphy*
- 13.6. Boxborough Finance Committee- *Mary Brolin*
- 13.7. Boxborough Board of Selectmen – *Maria Neyland, Brigid Bieber*
- 13.8. Minuteman Tech Update – *Diane Baum*
- 13.9. PTO/PTSO/PTF Co-Chairs– *Deanne O’Sullivan*
- 13.10. Letter of Support for Outdoor Playspaces Proposal to Boxborough Community Preservation Committee – *Katie Neville*
Given the timing, it was the sense of the Committee that this letter was acceptable.

14. **Acton Special Town Meeting re Citizens' Petition (11/10/15) Report** – *Kristina Rychlik*

- 14.1. Amended Article, distributed at Town Meeting
- 14.2. Final ABRSC Statement
- 14.3. Warrant found at <http://www.acton-ma.gov/ArchiveCenter/ViewFile/Item/7371>

Acton Town Meeting voted in favor (104-88) of the Citizens' Petition. Kristina Rychlik asked the Committee to consider what, if anything, this means for the committee/district/administration. She summarized that a number of things were learned as this process evolved: there is some sentiment against over testing, there is some sentiment against government involvement in education, and there is some sentiment concerned with data privacy. The Committee agreed that all should try to be sensitive to those sentiments moving forward. There are, however, a number of issues that continue to be misunderstood, particularly around Common Core. She repeated that someone asked, "Does the town really know that they voted to ask you to do something illegal?" It was the sense of the Committee that given that the District will not participate in PARCC testing, and Common Core is a reality, they could agree to disagree with the Citizens' Petition and Special Town Meeting decision.

15. **Superintendent's Report** – *Glenn Brand*

- 15.1. Report of Professional Learning Day, 11/3/15
Deborah Bookis summarized this very successful event.
- 15.2. Advisement on Administration Compensation
Dr. Brand asked the Committee to appoint two Budget Subcommittee members to join him and the Director of Human Resources on an Administration Compensation Ad Hoc Committee. Salary ranges are an important part of attracting good candidates and the District does not have this type of resource. Benefits include increased transparency and it would maintain the District's competitiveness. The Budget Subcommittee will meet on Monday and discuss this.

16. **Senior Leadership Administrative Restructuring Proposal** – Second Reading – **VOTE**

(Note: Marie Altieri, Deborah Bookis, Clare Jeannotte and Bonnie Bisbicos left for this discussion.) Dr. Brand originally hoped the School Committee would vote his proposal at this meeting. MGL states that it is the Committee's responsibility to appoint certain positions including Assistant Superintendents. After meeting with the principals, cabinet and most of the School Committee members, he believes his proposal was generally well received. He has received some feedback that the District administrative structure could benefit from a clear distinction regarding someone who would be second in command as an assistant superintendent, or deputy superintendent.

Given his inability to solicit more feedback on this specific question, he recommended:

- 1. Tabling his recommendation for the two assistant superintendents for Teaching and Learning and Operations until he has more information.
- 2. Approving one reclassification of the current position of Director of Pupil Services to the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, to take effect July 1, 2016. This is time sensitive due to the search that will need to be done.

Dr. Brand proposed continuing consideration of the other two assistant superintendents (#1 above) at the next School Committee meeting, but it may need to be later given the holiday, certainly soon.

Mike Coppolino stated that he was not adequately persuaded, if the main reason for this change was to attract a higher quality candidate. He wanted to see the whole restructuring plan. Paul Murphy asked what additional data needed to be gathered. He felt that nothing had changed, and he was in support of the original proposal. He liked the idea of having a #2 position if the Superintendent is out. Dr. Brand stated that he wanted to provide a clear sense of how broad his vision was for the Committee. It was his belief that no matter what the titles are, the district could benefit from the formal designation of a #2 person.

Kristina Rychlik spoke in support of a deputy superintendent role instead of an assistant superintendent of operations. She felt here was a risk of voting only one position. A deputy superintendent role would show the breadth and depth of the person in this role. It represents this reality and what this person has done for several years. This position is less about the restructuring and more about the recognition. There is no downside to having a deputy superintendent and two assistant superintendents. Kristina stated that this job has been performed for a number of years and this is a way to recognize and formalize it.

Mike Coppolino felt that this was a dramatic change to what Dr Brand proposed in the packet. Brigid Bieber agreed with Kristina, but stated that that is not what Dr. Brand was asking the Committee to do now. Paul Murphy stated that he will support what Dr. Brand proposed as long as the Committee followed through at the next meeting. Diane Baum stated that the District needs a really strong leader in student services and she supports this proposal.

Maria Neyland moved, Brigid Bieber seconded and it was,

VOTED: to approve Dr. Brand's proposal as presented this evening, not what is in the packet, to change the position of the Director of Pupil Services to the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services.

(YES: Baum, Bieber, Brolin, Krishnamurthy, Minkin, Murphy, Neville, Neyland, O'Sullivan, Rychlik NO: Coppolino)

It was presumed that the Committee will take up discussion of the other two proposed positions at the next available School Committee meeting.

17. **EXECUTIVE SESSION**:

At 10:19 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously,

VOTED by roll call: that the **Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee** go into Executive Session pursuant to MGL c. 30A, § 21(a)(7) to comply with any general or special law requirements (i.e., c. 30A, § 22(f) and(g)) for the approval of executive session minutes for: 12/11/14, 1/22/15, 3/19/15, 6/25/15 and 7/22/15.

(YES – Baum, Bieber, Brolin, Coppolino, Krishnamurthy, Minkin, Murphy, Neville, Neyland, O'Sullivan, Rychlik)

Kristina Rychlik stated that the Committee would return to open session solely to adjourn.

At 10:20 p.m., it was moved, seconded and unanimously,

VOTED by roll call: that the **Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee** go into Executive Session pursuant to MGL c. 30A, § 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to litigation (i.e., Decision dated November 13, 2015).

(YES – Baum, Bieber, Brolin, Coppolino, Krishnamurthy, Minkin, Murphy, Neville, Neyland, O'Sullivan, Rychlik)

Kristina Rychlik stated that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Board and the Committee would return to open session solely to adjourn.

The ABRSC returned to open session and adjourned at 11:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Beth Petr

List of documents used: see agenda



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

16 Charter Road Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700 x 3209 fax: 978-264-3340
www.abschools.org

4.

Marie Altieri
Deputy Superintendent

To: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee
Date: March 16, 2016
Re: FY17 School Choice Hearing

The Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools last accepted new school choice students in grades 9-12 about ten years ago. Since then, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee has voted by May of every year to only accept siblings of school choice students in grades 9-12. The Boxborough Public School District accepted school choice students at Blanchard Elementary School for several years before full regionalization. We currently have 39 school choice students (14 at Blanchard, 6 at R.J. Grey, and 19 at ABRHS).

For the last several years, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee has voted to only accept siblings of current school choice students. The DESE (Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) informed us last year that the school committee cannot vote to only accept siblings of current school choice students. They said that this does not have to be a big change, but the School Committee should vote to generally accept school choice students if we want to continue to admit siblings. The school choice law requires that preference be given to siblings, and any other school choice applicants would be entered into a lottery, only if there are open seats. DESE said that you can vote to accept school choice students, and then limit the number of those school choice students by grade. If you accept school choice students, by law siblings would get preference to any seats that you make available.

At this time we are aware of one sibling of an existing school choice student, so our intent would be to only accept one school choice student for the 2016-2017 school year, based on class size and space concerns.

Recommended motion for the March 17, 2016 meeting **VOTE**:

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee moves to continue in the School Choice program and limit openings to one seat in Kindergarten for FY17.

Our Mission is to prepare all students to attain their full potential as life-long learners, critical thinkers, and productive citizens of our diverse community and global society.



Clare Jeannotte <cjeannotte@abschools.org>

Excess and Deficiency Notification for Acton Boxborough

1 message

recapdata@dor.state.ma.us <recapdata@dor.state.ma.us> Wed, Mar 16, 2016 at 11:22 AM
To: cjeannotte@abschools.org, gbrand@abschools.org, bos@acton-ma.gov, bbieber@abschools.org,
selectmen@boxborough-ma.gov, kneville@abschools.org, mneyland@abschools.org, mbrolin@abschools.org,
mdennehy@abschools.org, dlsitgroup@dor.state.ma.us

Massachusetts Department of Revenue Division of Local Services
Mark Nunnelly, Commissioner of Revenue
Sean R. Cronin, Senior Deputy Commissioner of Local Services

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Acton Boxborough

Re: **EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY - Acton Boxborough**

Based upon the unaudited balance sheet submitted, I hereby certify that the amount of excess and deficiency or "E & D" as of July 1, 2015 for Acton Boxborough is:

General Fund \$ 1,950,365

This certification is in accordance with the provisions of G. L. Chapter 71, §16B½ , as amended. The unencumbered funds certified above in excess of five percent of the operating budget and budgeted capital costs for the succeeding fiscal year, must be applied to reduce the current fiscal year's assessment. For your district, this excess amount equals \$ 0.

This certification letter will also be e-mailed to the school superintendent, the board of selectmen in each member town and the city council in each member city immediately upon approval, provided an e-mail address is reported in DLS' Local Officials Directory. Please forward to other officials that you deem appropriate.

Sincerely,

Mary Jane Handy
Director of Accounts

cc: cjeannotte@abschools.org;gbrand@abschools.org;bos@acton-ma.gov;bbieber@abschools.org;selectmen@boxborough-ma.gov;kneville@abschools.org;mneyland@abschools.org;mbrolin@abschools.org;mdennehy@abschools.org;dlsitgroup@dor.state.ma.us

This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they

SUBMITTED BY	Clare Jeannotte	DISTRICT	Acton Boxboro RSD
PHONE	978-264-3305	DATE RECEIVED	02/23/16
FIELD REP	Amy Handfield	DATE SUBMISSION COMPLETE	03/01/16

EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY CALCULATION

<u>BEGIN:</u>		
UNRESERVED FUND BALANCE/EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY		<u>1,955,337</u>
<u>LESS:</u>		
OTHER RECEIVABLE, OVERDRAWN ACCOUNTS, DEFICITS		
SPED IDEA		<u>1,024</u>
Essential Schools Health Services		<u>69</u>
SOLAR OATA Grant		<u>558</u>
CPC Nature Place Space		<u>3,200</u>
Judith M. Scott Scholarship		<u>122</u>
		<u>-</u>
		<u>-</u>
		<u>-</u>
		<u>-</u>
		<u>-</u>
		<u>-</u>
<u>OTHER ADJUSTMENTS:</u>		
		<u>-</u>
		<u>-</u>
		<u>-</u>
TOTAL CERTIFIED UNENCUMBERED EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY		<u>1,950,365</u>

UNENCUMBERED E & D IN EXCESS OF 5% CALCULATION

OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET		<u>79,749,882</u>
5% OF BUDGET		<u>3,987,494</u>
TOTAL IN EXCESS		<u>-</u>

REVIEWED BY:	<u>Amy Handfield</u>	PLEASE SEE CERTIFICATION LETTER
DATE:	<u>03/02/2016</u>	FOR DIRECTOR OF ACCOUNTS APPROVAL



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700 www.abschools.org

7.1

Clare L. Jeannotte
Director of Finance

TO: Regional Finance Oversight Committee
FROM: Clare Jeannotte, Director of Finance
RE: Calculation of PPE by school FY'15
DATE: March 3, 2016

Process - Same as DESE

- Includes all fund sources: Appropriated, Grants and Special Revenues
- Uses 10/1/14 Sims Enrollment data
- Uses Munis records and End of year report data
- Average Per Pupil Excludes DOE Function codes:
 - 6000 Community Services
 - 7000 Fixed Assets
 - 8000 Debt retirement and Debt service

Of note:

- Integrated pre-school reported as separate location; student counts and teaching costs removed from Blanchard and Merriam
- Districtwide costs evaluated to remove staff and charge to proper schools. (All funds, including School Choice, other revolving, and grants)
- Remaining Districtwide and Central costs allocated pro-rata per pupil to buildings.

Result:

FY15 PPE for Blanchard calculated at \$14,814, \$2,628 or 22% higher than the Acton average elementary school at \$12,186. Much is driven by enrollment/class size/ and average salary of professional staff.

- Analyzed elementary school costs by function code for significant differences between Boxborough and Acton Elementary Average. Reasons of note include:
 1. Higher teacher, specialist and medical therapeutic staff costs per pupil at Blanch account for \$1,660 of the \$2,628 difference.
 2. Paraprofessional average per pupil is \$381 per pupil higher at Blanchard
 3. Blanchard is the only elementary with a certified librarian, \$192 per pupil higher than Acton
 4. Guidance and counselling costs are \$58 per pupil higher at Blanchard
 5. Custodial and Utilities are \$274 per pupil higher at Blanchard.
 6. Areas where Blanchard per pupil are lower are not of large dollar amounts.

Our Mission is to prepare all students to attain their full potential as life-long learners, critical thinkers, and productive citizens of our diverse community and global society.

**FY2014-2015 Per Pupil Expense by School-Munis Locations. All Funds (exclude DOE 6000:8000
And FC 9000 divided by specific enrollment: Choice, Charter, OOD)**

FINAL 3/16/16

Location	Department	Total	Oct 2014 SIMS # of Student	per pupil	realloc DW	Revised total	Revised PPE
05	Central Office	13,310,868.67			(13,310,868.67)	-	
11	Admin Bldg	43,882.90			(43,882.90)	-	
12	Maint Shed	3,827.22			(3,827.22)	-	
14	District Wide	11,188,106.89			(11,188,106.89)	-	
15	Senior High	16,475,798.56	1,903.00	12,955.65	8,255,981.42	24,731,779.98	12,996.21
16	Junior High	7,670,323.98	907.00	12,804.13	3,934,931.76	11,605,255.74	12,795.21
17	Blanchard	4,122,395.88	393.00	14,932.38	1,704,992.48	5,827,388.36	14,827.96
18	Conant	3,759,361.03	459.00	12,552.23	1,991,327.10	5,750,688.13	12,528.73
19	Douglas	3,342,276.77	480.00	11,255.57	2,082,433.57	5,424,710.34	11,301.48
20	Gates	3,391,311.82	430.00	12,146.06	1,865,513.40	5,256,825.22	12,225.17
21	McCarthy Town	3,693,077.37	467.00	12,233.66	2,026,034.33	5,719,111.70	12,246.49
22	Merriam	4,235,283.78	517.00	12,510.05	2,242,954.49	6,478,238.27	12,530.44
23	Preschool	1,376,854.15	102.00	18,717.83	442,517.13	1,819,371.28	17,836.97
		72,613,369.02	5,658.00	12,833.75	-	72,613,369.02	12,833.75
					4,338.40		excl OOD
					24,546,685.68		
	OOD -9000	7,557,790.00	146.10	51,730.25			
	OOD -3300	981,009.00	146.10	6,714.64			
	Total OOD Tuition & Transportation	8,538,799.00	146.10	58,444.89			
	Total Per Pupil Costs	81,152,168.02	5,804.10	13,981.87			
Reconciliation to total costs:							
	FC 7000 Capital	778,681.85					
	FC 8000 Debt	1,822,733.35					
	total spending	83,753,583.22	5,804.10	14,430.07			
					393	5,827,388	14,827.96
					2,353	28,629,574	12,167.26
					Avg Acton		1.22
							% diff

DESE ACTUAL PPE

TOTAL PPE DESE:	Acton			Boxborough			% Diff Box to Acton
	DESE \$	Students	PPC	DESE \$	Students	PPC	
2011	\$ 29,792,355	2,595.10	\$ 11,480	\$ 7,039,890	495.00	\$ 14,222	124%
2012	\$ 29,850,051	2,558.00	\$ 11,669	\$ 7,484,023	482.00	\$ 15,527	133%
2013	\$ 30,976,806	2,545.60	\$ 12,169	\$ 7,477,344	456.70	\$ 16,373	135%
2014	\$ 31,443,134	2,500.70	\$ 12,574	\$ 7,444,371	445.20	\$ 16,721	133%
<p>NOTE: Represents blended per pupil by district, including OOD students and costs. A better benchmark is in district separate from OOD:</p>							
Out of District ONLY	Acton			Boxborough			% Diff Box to Acton
	DESE \$	Students	PPC	DESE \$	Students	PPC	
2011	\$ 1,858,089	22.80	\$ 81,495	\$ 586,327	8.70	\$ 67,394	83%
2012	\$ 1,604,015	32.20	\$ 49,814	\$ 640,990	9.80	\$ 65,407	131%
2013	\$ 1,995,751	34.30	\$ 58,185	\$ 582,104	8.90	\$ 65,405	112%
2014	\$ 1,844,185	47.40	\$ 38,907	\$ 443,861	12.80	\$ 34,677	89%
In District ONLY	Acton			Boxborough			% Diff Box to Acton
	DESE \$	Students	PPC	DESE \$	Students	PPC	
2011	\$ 27,934,266	2,572.30	\$ 10,860	\$ 6,453,563	486.30	\$ 13,271	122%
2012	\$ 28,246,036	2,525.80	\$ 11,183	\$ 6,843,033	472.20	\$ 14,492	130%
2013	\$ 28,981,055	2,511.30	\$ 11,540	\$ 6,895,240	447.80	\$ 15,398	133%
2014	\$ 29,598,949	2,453.30	\$ 12,065	\$ 7,000,510	432.40	\$ 16,190	134%

Actual and Projected Differences in Per Pupil Costs Between Acton and Boxborough Schools Based on APS and BPS Actuals, Budgets and Projections
SOURCE: REGIONALIZATION PLANNING MODEL

	Acton			Boxborough			% Diff Box to Acton	
	Budget	Students	PPC	Budget	Students	PPC		
2011	\$ 29,087,941	2,413	\$ 12,055	\$ 6,300,844	459	\$ 13,727	114%	Actual
2012	\$ 29,783,603	2,399	\$ 12,415	\$ 6,826,206	419	\$ 16,292	131%	Actual
2013	\$ 30,265,027	2,338	\$ 12,947	\$ 7,463,638	392	\$ 19,041	147%	Budget
2014	\$ 30,633,311	2,298	\$ 13,331	\$ 7,442,474	369	\$ 20,160	151%	Budget
2015	\$ 31,284,146	2,249	\$ 13,909	\$ 7,638,034	354	\$ 21,587	155%	Projection
2016	\$ 32,100,741	2,138	\$ 15,016	\$ 7,839,239	338	\$ 23,191	154%	Projection
2017	\$ 32,924,220	2,040	\$ 16,142	\$ 8,079,678	321	\$ 25,140	156%	Projection
2018	\$ 33,804,616	1,990	\$ 16,988	\$ 8,260,878	320	\$ 25,807	152%	Projection
2019	\$ 34,543,935	1,978	\$ 17,464	\$ 8,108,389	340	\$ 23,868	137%	Projection

NOTE: In comparing the 2011 and 2012 data above, supposed to be "actual", to DESE Website on 2/25/16, noted that amounts are not the actual PP Cost

Regionalization Financial Benefits Tracking

Tracking of Regionalization Staff Savings and Additional Regional Revenue

Regionalization Staff Savings	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
Eliminate Superintendent Position at Blanchard (Salary)	\$ 164,625	\$ 168,741	\$ 172,959
Eliminate Business Manager Position at Blanchard (Salary)	\$ 92,244	\$ 94,550	\$ 96,914
Eliminate Business Office Secretary Position at Blanchard (Salary)	\$ 22,846	\$ 23,417	\$ 24,003
Eliminate SPED Secretary Position at Blanchard (Salary)	\$ 22,845	\$ 23,416	\$ 24,002
Eliminate Contracted Services for SPED Dir at Blanchard	\$ 35,000	\$ 35,875	\$ 36,772
Eliminate Asst Principal/Add Principal at Blanchard	\$ (61,453)	\$ (62,989)	\$ (64,564)
Eliminate Clerk/Receptionist Position at Blanchard (Salary)	\$ 36,424	\$ 37,335	\$ 38,268
Eliminate Tech Support (Data Entry) Position at Blanchard (Salary)	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,625	\$ 26,266
Add 10% Art Teacher Position at Blanchard (Salary)	\$ (7,872)	\$ (8,196)	\$ (8,401)
Eliminate Phys Ed Teacher Position at Blanchard (Salary)	\$ 47,623	\$ 49,585	\$ 50,825
Eliminate Cafeteria Manager Position at Blanchard (Salary)	\$ 39,172	\$ 40,151	\$ 41,155
Eliminate Blanchard ELL Position/Share 50/50 with Douglas'	\$ 17,500	\$ 17,938	\$ 18,386
Eliminate Tech Specialist/Add Part-time Tech Position at Blanchard	\$ 94,600	\$ 97,000	\$ 99,425
Total Regionalization Staff Savings	\$ 528,554	\$ 542,447	\$ 556,008
Additional Regional Revenue	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
Lost Chapter 70 Aid due to Regionalization	\$ (156,287)	\$ (160,194)	\$ (164,199)
Additional Grade K-6 Regional Transportation Revenue	\$ 550,589	\$ 520,078	\$ 520,078
Additional Regional Bonus Aid	\$ 139,000	\$ 111,200	\$ 83,400
Total Additional Regional Revenue	\$ 533,302	\$ 471,084	\$ 439,279
Total Financial Benefits without Efficiencies	\$ 1,061,856	\$ 1,013,531	\$ 995,287

Regionalization Financial Benefits Tracking

Tracking of Efforts to Reduce Per Pupil Cost at Blanchard

The Regionalization Study Committee identified the need to bring the per pupil cost (PPC) at Blanchard in line with Acton elementary schools. To track efforts in this area, we include efficiencies that have occurred due to regionalization, as well as decreases due to other reasons such as lower enrollment. To conduct a more appropriate analysis, we will also analyze the per pupil costs at each elementary school each year.

Efficiencies Due to Regionalization Contributing to Lower PPC	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
Eliminate SPED Chairperson Position at Blanchard (Salary) (a)	\$ 52,199	\$ 54,350	\$ 55,708
Eliminate Curriculum Specialist Position at Blanchard (Salary) (b)	\$ 77,491	\$ 80,684	\$ 82,701
Eliminate Speech & Language Position at Blanchard (Salary) (c)	\$ 52,550	\$ 54,715	\$ 56,083
Savings in Health Insurance due to Eliminated Positions (a-c)	\$ 42,604	\$ 46,012	\$ 47,162
Share Behavioral Specialist from Blanchard with Douglas (50/50)	\$ 45,500	\$ 46,638	\$ 47,803
Reduce/Eliminate Custodian Position at Blanchard (Salary)	\$ 32,683	\$ 67,000	\$ 68,675
Move SPED Teacher from Blanchard to Douglas	\$ -	\$ 85,000	\$ 87,125
Total Savings from Regionalization Efficiencies	\$ 303,026	\$ 434,398	\$ 445,258
Other Decreases Contributing to Lower PPC	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17
Eliminate 1st Grade Teacher at Blanchard (Salary) (d)	\$ 50,123	\$ 52,188	\$ 53,493
Eliminate 6th Grade Teacher at Blanchard (Salary) (e)	\$ 59,614	\$ 62,070	\$ 63,622
Savings in Health Insurance due to Eliminated Positions (d&e)	\$ 32,648	\$ 35,260	\$ 36,142
Eliminate 2nd Grade Teacher at Blanchard (Salary) (w/health ins)	\$ -	\$ 85,000	\$ 87,125
3 Blanchard retirements at end of 2015 school year.	\$ -	\$ 120,000	\$ 123,000
2 Blanchard retirements at end of 2016 school year.	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 80,000
Total Savings from Other Decreases	\$ 142,385	\$ 354,518	\$ 443,381
Total Efforts to Reduce Per Pupil Cost at Blanchard	\$ 445,412	\$ 788,916	\$ 888,639

**Statement from the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
Regionalization Financial Oversight Committee - DRAFT**

March 3, 2016

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee created a sub-committee in the Fall of 2013 to review the projected financial benefits of Regionalization proposed by the Regional School District Study Committee (RSDSC) and presented to both Town meetings in the Spring of 2013.

The expectation is that the sub-committee will be in existence for five years. It currently consists of the following members:

- Acton Selectman - Janet Adachi
- Acton Finance Committee – Bob Evans
- Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee– Michael Coppolino (Acton)
- Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee – Mary Brolin (Boxborough)
- Boxborough Selectman – Vince Amoroso
- Boxborough Finance Committee – Amy Burke

The sub-committee held two public meetings this year, one in October and the other in March and was supported by Central Office staff, including Superintendent Glenn Brand, Deputy Superintendent Marie Altieri and Director of Finance Clare Jeannotte.

After reviewing in detail the average per pupil costs for each elementary school for FY 15 and the projected financial benefits, and comparing those with the budget approved by the Acton-Boxboro Regional School Committee to be presented here at Town Meeting, we concluded unanimously that: (1) the per pupil costs for each of the elementary schools has gone down, with Blanchard decreasing the most and getting closer to the average per pupil costs in the Acton schools. Additionally, FY '16 trends allow us to believe that per pupil costs at Blanchard will continue to decrease for FY '16. And (2) the projected regionalization savings, cost cutting, and increased Regional transportation aid are accurate and consistent with estimates that were presented at both Acton and Boxborough Town Meetings in the Spring of 2013.

Thank you!

Office of the Superintendent
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
16 Charter Road
Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700
www.abschools.org

To: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Members
From: Glenn A. Brand
Date: March 11, 2016
Re: Statement of Interest Process

The intention of this memo and accompanying information is to provide you with a more detailed insight into the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Statement of Interest (SOI) process.

Extensive information about both the MSBA as well as the SOI process can be found online at http://www.massschoolbuildings.org/building/2016_SOIs.

In addition, I have attached a copy of two additional documents:

- *Required Form of Vote To Submit A Statement of Interest*
- *Core Program Statement of Interest Process Overview*

Overview:

The FY16 budget included funding to support an extensive capital study that was specifically aimed at completing a thorough analysis of the capital needs of the district's school buildings. Through an open bid process, *Dore & Whittier Architects, Inc.* was selected to perform this study with their findings presented in February 2016. These findings are available online on the districts's website at <http://www.abschools.org/district/school-capital-and-space-planning>.

The findings of this facilities assessment study point to an extensive list of capital improvements that the district should consider for the long-term maintenance and operation of our buildings. The total identified improvements for all of the buildings combined was approximately \$120 million. Of specific note was the totality of identified needs at the elementary level within three (3) of the schools, including the CT Douglas Elementary (approximately \$17 million), the Luther Conant Elementary (approximately \$17 million) and the Paul Gates Elementary School (approximately \$14 million).

The sum total of these needs across the district, and in particular at the elementary level, clearly give rise to the vital need for the district to explore viable options that can assist in the provision of future financial assistance. In the absence of such assistance, it will be up to the district, and thus the citizens of the two towns, to shoulder the responsibility entirely of financially supporting the expenses associated with these future capital improvements. Exploring a potential partnership with the MSBA is one important option that could provide considerable grant funds to offset costs for any future renovation/repair project that we might deem necessary.

The Massachusetts School Building Authority

The MSBA is a governmental authority that serves to work with local communities to assist in the process of funding capital improvement projects in the Commonwealth's public schools.

There are currently two programs which the MSBA accepts invitations from local communities. The first is the *Accelerated Repair Program* which specifically covers "envelope" type issues such as roofs, windows and boilers. The second program is the *Core Program* which is designed specifically for projects that are beyond the scope of the Accelerated Repair Program and include extensive repairs, renovations, additions and new school construction. The district has partnered with the MSBA in the past for Core projects that have included the RJ Grey Junior High School (renovation and addition), the Parker Damon Building (new construction), the AB Regional High School (renovation and addition) as well Accelerated Repair projects that included Conant Elementary School (boiler and uninvent systems) and the Douglas Elementary School (roof replacement).

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 70B, and the MSBA's regulations, a Statement of Interest (or SOI) must be submitted to the MSBA in order to participate in the application process. In essence, any school district (regional or otherwise) that does not submit an SOI will not be eligible to participate in the application process for the MSBA grant program for that year.

"The Statement of Interest (SOI) is the first step for districts in expressing interest in the MSBA's grant program for school construction, renovation, and repair projects. All districts are welcome to submit an SOI which identifies the perceived deficiencies in their school facilities."

Pg. 3, MSBA Statement of Interest User Guide

Currently, the MSBA is accepting applications for Core Program SOIs until *Friday, April 8, 2016*.

Some additional information to note:

Cost: The MSBA process does not cost anything for a district to submit an SOI. The information necessary to complete the application is assembled from a number of sources that include the Principal, Director of Facilities and Superintendent of Schools, along with the data obtained from Dore & Whittier's assessment completed as a part of the district's Existing Conditions Study in Phase I of the Capital Study.

The SOI: A district is required to submit a separate SOI for each school facility that the district might, at some point, be seeking MSBA approval for as a future project.

Recommendations of SOIs for the District: given the totality of needs that were recently identified within our capital study, it is clear that three of our six elementary schools – Douglas Elementary School, Gates Elementary School, Conant Elementary School - are in considerable need of repair and/or renovation given the extensive (and extremely costly) deficiencies identified in the completed report.

It is my recommendation that the Committee authorize the submission of three (3) Core Program SOI's for the aforementioned buildings in time to meet the deadline of April 8, 2016.

Based on the specific categories that a district must identify as the rationale for submitting an SOI, I will propose that the following serve as the categories (see pg. 4 of the *MSBA Statement of Interest System User Guide*) for all three of these school facilities:

- i. *Elimination of existing severe overcrowding*
- ii. *Replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility*
- iii. *Replacement of, or addition to, obsolete buildings in order to provide a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements*

SOI Certification: according to the requirements set forth by the MSBA, the School Committee of a regional school district is required to vote to approve the submission of an SOI. See attached "*Required Form of Vote To Submit A Statement of Interest.*"

Next Steps:

- i) *Public Meeting* - although the MSBA guidelines for regional school districts do not require a public meeting beyond the one at which the School Committee must vote to authorize the submission of an SOI, it is my intention to hold a special meeting solely for the purposes of providing an update of information to town members regarding the

capital study and the intention for the district to submit SOIs *TENTATIVELY* on Tuesday, March 29, 2016.

- ii) *Special School Committee Meeting* - assuming that the Administration can complete the required documentation necessary to submit an SOI by the last week in March, it is my intention to recommend that the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee call a special meeting prior to the Acton Town Meeting on Monday, April 4 for the sole purpose of voting to authorize the Superintendent to submit the SOIs in time to meet the MSBA deadline of Friday, April 8, 2016.

REQUIRED FORM OF VOTE TO SUBMIT A STATEMENT OF INTEREST

REQUIRED VOTES

If a City or Town, a vote in the following form is required from both the City Council/Board of Aldermen **OR** the Board of Selectmen/equivalent governing body **AND** the School Committee.

If a regional school district, a vote in the following form is required from the Regional School Committee only.

FORM OF VOTE

Please use the text below to prepare your City's, Town's or District's required vote(s).

Resolved: Having convened in an open meeting on _____, prior to the closing date, the __[City Council/Board of Aldermen, Board of Selectmen/Equivalent Governing Body / School Committee]__ of __[City/Town]__, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated _____ for the __[Name of School]__ located at __[Address]__ which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future _____[Insert a description of the priority(s) checked off on the Statement of Interest Form and a brief description of the deficiency described therein for each priority]_____

_____ ; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

DOCUMENTATION OF VOTE

Documentation of each vote must be submitted as follows:

For the vote of the City Council/Board of Aldermen or Board of Selectmen/equivalent governing body, a copy of the text of the vote must be submitted with a certification of the City/Town Clerk that the vote was duly recorded and the date of the vote must be provided.

For the vote of the School Committee, Minutes of the School Committee meeting at which the vote was taken must be submitted with the original signature of the Committee Chairperson.

Core Program Statement of Interest Process Overview

Introduction

The Massachusetts School Building Authority's (the "MSBA's") grant program is a non-entitlement, competitive program, and its grants are distributed by the MSBA Board of Directors based on need and urgency, as expressed by the district and validated by the MSBA. The MSBA completes an exhaustive review of available information regarding all districts that submit a Statement of Interest ("SOI") for the Core Program each year. The goals of this review include:

- To determine those schools that are the most urgent and needy relative to the pool of SOI submittals filed in that year. The MSBA considers many factors when looking at the totality of the SOIs including, but not limited to, the age of the building, the amount of space per student, the current and projected enrollment, the condition of the major systems of the school, the general environment of the building and the appropriateness of the building to the educational mission;
- To collaborate with districts on the potential project that they have identified as the priority school if they are filing more than one SOI for that given year;
- To understand if the MSBA is currently partnering with the district on another core project already underway; and
- To understand the range of options each district faces when planning for district-wide educational facilities.

The following information provides an overview of the SOI process from initial opening of the SOI period each January until the Board of Directors votes to authorize invitations to the MSBA's grant program at a subsequent winter Board meeting.

The SOI Filing Period

The MSBA opens its Statement of Interest System annually for districts to file one or more SOIs for either the Core Program or the Accelerated Repair Program. The SOI is the tool districts use to identify the deficiencies and/or programmatic issues that exist in their facilities. Districts should submit one SOI per school for each school that they believe requires a project. An SOI should only be filed for a facility where a district has the ability to fund a project in the next two years. Over the last several years, the SOI system has opened in early January. SOIs are typically due for the Accelerated Repair Program in early February and for the Core Program in early April.

The MSBA has received approximately 100 to 125 SOIs for the Core Program annually. The number of invitations that the Board is able to authorize each year varies, and is contingent on a number of factors. The MSBA has to operate within its annual statutory budget cap. The number of invitations varies based on the characteristics of the pool of applicants, including the number of elementary, middle or high schools that file, total square footage of the schools, and the reimbursement rates of the districts that are invited to participate in the MSBA's grant program. Thus, applying for an MSBA grant is competitive, and not every SOI can be invited into the grant program.

The Funding Cap

The Commonwealth irrevocably dedicated a 1% statewide sales tax, known as the School Modernization Trust fund ("SMART Fund"), to the MSBA's capital program. The state sales tax collections inform the amount of annual funding the MSBA can commit for projects. The MSBA's enabling legislation limits increases or decreases annually thereafter by the lesser of four and one half percent (4.5%) of the limit for the prior fiscal year or the percentage increase or decrease of the dedicated sales tax revenue amount over the prior fiscal year.

The SOI Due Diligence Process

The SOI process involves the District filing an electronic and print version of an SOI with the MSBA by the dates established. MSBA staff is readily available to address concerns, questions, and issues during the filing period. Once the filing period has closed, MSBA staff commences the due diligence process for all SOIs. This is a 4-phase process, which includes:

1. Review SOI submissions for completeness;
2. Review SOI submissions and accompanying documents for content;
3. Conduct senior study visits, if required; and
4. Recommend SOIs for invitation into Eligibility Period.

During this process, the MSBA may seek to obtain additional or clarifying information from districts. As the MSBA reviews the entire cohort of SOIs received, it will determine the appropriate level of due diligence that will be required for each SOI and will notify districts of next steps accordingly.

1. Review SOI submission for completeness:

Once the SOI system has closed, MSBA staff reviews each submission to check that all of the required materials have been received. The MSBA works with districts throughout the filing period to ensure that the SOI is complete. For all SOI submissions, the district needs to provide:

- A hard copy of the SOI with the required signatures; there are two separate certifications in each SOI where district officials need to sign;
- A hard copy of the Closed Schools Certification with the required signatures;
- Hard copies of the required local vote documentation that is detailed in the SOI; and
- Any supporting materials required to be submitted with the SOI.

Districts are expected to submit the hard copies of the materials and have them post-marked on or before the due date for the Program submission deadline. The district and the MSBA should discuss in advance of the filing date any extenuating circumstances or requests for exceptions to receipt of the hard copy material.

2. Review each SOI submission and accompanying documents for content:

Once an SOI is determined to be complete, MSBA staff review the information and any additional documents submitted by the district. MSBA staff then compiles the data necessary to assess which SOIs filed in that calendar year may be categorized as the most urgent and needy. Determining the most urgent and needy SOIs relies on many different data sources. MSBA staff use over 50 data points that include the SOI, the MSBA project management system, the MSBA's enrollment tool, the MSBA's 2010 Needs Survey, and information from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education ("DESE"). There are many factors that can impact the assessment of urgency and need in an SOI, such as increasing enrollment, overcrowding, building condition, general environment, and program deficiencies. As such, it is important to assemble as much data as possible so that staff may gain as complete a picture of the submitted SOI as possible.

Due to the volume of SOIs submitted for the Core Program, the MSBA requests that each district identify a priority SOI for consideration. This enables the district and the MSBA to focus financial and staff resources on completing a project and ensures that an opportunity for a grant is possible for as many districts as possible. This narrows down the pool of potential projects if districts have submitted multiple schools within the district for consideration.

With its focus on the district identified SOI priority, MSBA staff then looks at this smaller pool of submitted SOIs to assess urgency and need focusing on:

- Needs Survey rating of building condition;
- Needs Survey rating of general environment;
- Previous or ongoing project activity with the MSBA; and
- Section 8 of the MSBA's statute.

Consideration of these factors produces a smaller subset of the priority SOIs that appear to be more urgent and needy than the other SOIs submitted that year. With this assessment, a group of SOIs are identified for further consideration. This further review may or may not require a senior study visit. If the MSBA is familiar with the school facility identified in the SOI or if the SOI has already received a senior study visit within the previous two years, a senior study visit may not be needed for that SOI. The MSBA may choose to re-visit a school within this two-year window if the SOI contains new information since the last visit.

3. Conduct Senior Study Visits, if required:

If MSBA staff determines that a senior study visit is needed to complete the due diligence process, MSBA staff, accompanied by its technical consultant, will visit the SOI facility. The senior study visit lasts approximately two hours and is an opportunity for the MSBA to further understand the issues identified in the district's SOI. MSBA staff requests that the district have someone familiar with the facilities and systems present, as well as someone who is familiar with the curriculum as it relates to the program offered. The district is requested to provide a copy of the school's floor plans (emergency/evacuation plans are sufficient) ahead of the MSBA's visit.

The senior study visit starts with a meeting to review the SOI, the MSBA process, and to hear district concerns. The discussion is followed by a tour of the main areas of the school, as well as typical general classrooms and specialty spaces.

Dependent upon the number of senior study visits that are required, this phase can take approximately 8 to 10 weeks, with visits typically scheduled from September through November.

4. Recommend SOIs for Invitation into Eligibility Period:

Once the content review and senior study visits have been completed, MSBA staff once again review the factors, noted above, that can impact the assessment of urgency and need in an SOI (increasing enrollment, evidence of overcrowding, building condition, general environment and program deficiencies), to understand the total impact of all of the factors on the overall need of the SOI. As the number of invitations that the MSBA can issue varies each year, and the number of SOIs received each year exceeds the MSBA's annual cap expenditure, MSBA staff compares the SOIs that were selected for further review to each other to determine a degree of urgency and need, ranging from minor to major, for each of the SOIs. MSBA staff then provide their findings to the Chief Executive Officer, Executive Director/Deputy Chief Executive Officer, the MSBA's Facilities Assessment Subcommittee, and the Board of Directors. Once the recommendations have been accepted, MSBA staff works with the districts to determine the optimum Board meeting for the district to receive an invitation into Eligibility Period from the Board of Directors.

Source: Taken from the MSBA website:

http://www.massschoolbuildings.org/building/SOIs/CP_Process_Overview

Office of the Superintendent
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 16 Charter Road
 Acton, MA 01720
 978-264-4700
www.abschools.org

TO: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Members
 FROM: Glenn A. Brand, Ed.D.
 DATE: March 11, 2016
 RE: Membership of the Capital Study: Working Group and Visioning Team

As an update to my Capital Study Phase II report at your last meeting, here are the members of the two groups:

Capital Study: Working Group

Glenn Brand	Admin - CO
Marie Altieri	Admin - CO
Deb Bookis	Admin - CO
JD Head	Admin - CO
Erin Bettez	Admin - CO
Larry Dorey	Admin - HS
Andrew Shen	Admin - JHS
Chris Whitbeck	Admin - Elem
Amy Krishnamurthy	SC - Acton
Maya Minkin	SC - Acton
Brigid Bieber	SC - Box
Doug Tindal	Acton rep
John Fallon	Boxborough rep

Capital Study: Visioning Team

Glenn Brand	Superintendent	Central Office
Marie Altieri	Deputy Superintendent	Central Office
Deborah Bookis	Assistant Superintendent	Central Office
JD Head	Director	Facilities and Trans
Erin Bettez	Director	Community Education
Bonnie Bisbicos	Director	Student Services

Amy Bisiewicz	Director	Ed Tech
Mary Emmons	Director	Student Services
Clare Jeannotte	Director	Finance
Tammy Costello	Admin	Human Resources
Kate Crosby	Admin	Facilities
	Admin	
Maya Minkin	SC	Acton Rep
Kristina Rychlik	SC	Acton Rep
Kathleen Neville	SC	Boxborough Rep
Chris Whitbeck	Douglas	Administration
Amy Maciel	Douglas	Teacher
Meghan Giannetto	Douglas	Teacher
Jenna Larrenaga	Douglas	Staff
Jill Maxwell	Douglas	Parent
Melissa Gaudette	Douglas	Parent
Karen Tower	Blanchard	Administration
Brian Gentile	Blanchard	Teacher
Connie Long	Blanchard	Teacher
Regina Fitek	Blanchard	Support Staff
Margeaux Dushin	Blanchard	Parent
Adam Klein	Blanchard	Parent
Lynn Newman	Gates	Administration
June Montepeluso	Gates	Teacher
Kim Ward	Gates	Teacher
Judy O'Brien	Gates	Support Staff
Jack Fahey	Gates	Parent
Mark Rosen	Gates	Parent
Juliana Schneider	Merriam	Administration
Vanessa Mann	Merriam	Teacher
Christy Nealon	Merriam	Teacher
Wendy Gomez	Merriam	Support Staff
Andy Gatesman	Merriam	Parent
Jack Kline	Merriam	Parent

Andrew Shen	JrHS	Administration
Jim Marcotte	JrHS	Administration
Anne Spaulding	JrHS	Support Staff
Spencer Harvey	JrHS	Teacher
Louisa Latham	JrHS	Teacher
Maks Emelyanov	JrHS	Student
Camille Smokelin	JrHS	Student
Buster O'Brien	JrHS	Parent
Sean Peng	JrHS	Parent
Lisa Franklin	Community - Acton Community - Acton Community - Acton Community - Boxborough Community - Boxborough	Council on Disabilities
Beth Baker	ABRHS	Administration
Larry Dorey	ABRHS	Administration
Parindar Miller	ABRHS	Teacher
Brendan Hearn	ABRHS	Teacher
Ru Sweeney	ABRHS	Support Staff
Pam Fleming	ABRHS	Parent
Mark Saganich	ABRHS	Parent
Atharva Kasar	ABRHS	Student (Gr 9)
Emma Bowe-Shulman	ABRHS	Student (Gr 11)
Brandon O'Donoghue	ABRHS	Student (Gr 11)
Maddie Heavey	ABRHS	Student (Gr 10)
Matt McDowell	McTowne	Administration
Heather Matthews	McTowne	Teacher
Dave James	McTowne	Teacher
Astrid Trostorff	McTowne	Support Staff
Bobby Matthews	McTowne	Parent
	McTowne	Parent
Damian Sugrue	Conant	Administration
Kerrie Stewart	Conant	Teacher

Sara Wilcox	Conant	Teacher
Mike Liuzzo	Conant	Support Staff
Srinivas Anantha	Conant	Parent
	Conant	Parent
Joe Gibowicz	Preschool	Administration
Catherine Centrella	Preschool	Teacher



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

School Capital & Space Planning Community Meeting

Tuesday, March 29, 7:00pm – 8:00pm

Douglas School Cafeteria

Join *Superintendent* Dr. Glenn Brand and *Director of Facilities* Mr. JD Head on Tuesday, March 29, from 7:00pm – 8:00pm in the Douglas School Cafeteria for a community meeting. We will provide an update about the school district's recent focus on school building and infrastructure improvements.

We will review Phase I and Phase II of the district's capital study, and will provide an overview of the efforts currently underway to identify the current and future capital needs of the district. In addition, we will discuss the district's recent partnerships with the *Massachusetts School Building Authority* (MSBA) for school building repair and renovation, and will offer a preview of future possible projects we are exploring with the MSBA.

All members of the Acton and Boxborough communities are welcome to attend this informational session.

To learn more, go to the "About Us" page on the school district website, and click on "School Capital and Space Planning" (<http://www.abschools.org/district/school-capital-and-space-planning>).

Office of the Superintendent
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16 Charter Road
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www.abschools.org

TO: Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Members
FROM: Glenn A. Brand, Ed.D.
DATE: March 15, 2016
RE: Recommendation regarding ABRSD Legal Resources

Last November, Kristina Rychlik, Michael Coppolino, Maria Neyland and Brigid Bieber met with Marie Altieri and me to discuss a possible change in the School Committee's legal counsel.

In January, we invited Attorney Andrea Bell of Stoneman, Chandler & Miller LLP and Attorney Peter Ebb of Ropes & Gray LLP, to speak with us about their services. Both of these attorneys, and their firms, are very familiar to our Administration and the School Committee. Several attorneys at Stoneman, Chandler & Miller have been used extensively by our Special Education Department for many years. Recently, we have expanded our use of Stoneman, Chandler & Miller for personnel issues and the "Pledge Case". We have been very pleased with their services. Ropes & Gray Attorney Peter Ebb was employed by the District for over 20 years, specifically for negotiations, personnel issues and school committee matters, with much success.

We propose that the School Committee consider the following motion:

that both the School District and the School Committee use the firm of Stoneman, Chandler & Miller LLP as well as Attorney Peter Ebb of Ropes & Gray LLP as counsel.

Thank you.

Draft

11.

Dear Commissioner Chester,

The Acton Boxborough Regional School Committee is interested in exploring alternative options for our school calendar. In considering alternatives to February and April vacations as recommended by DESE, we note the inherent conflict with the current statewide standardized testing schedule. With possible upcoming sweeping changes in statewide standardized testing and the interest of some districts to adapt new vacation schedules, such as one week in March, now is the time to consider change.

Currently DESE recommends flexibility and autonomy for districts to set their calendars yet builds in constraints that pose significant challenges for any change. On its website DESE suggests that "in order to build in flexibility and ensure that all students receive the teaching and learning time to which they are entitled we strongly recommend that school officials consider taking the following actions to facilitate meeting the 180-day school year and student learning time requirements...schedule a one week vacation in March instead of week long vacations in February and April." (DESE Education Laws and Regulations Policy School Day and Structured Student Learning Time Requirements).

Despite the DESE recommendations, the dates for standardized testing are released long after most districts have set their calendar for the following year. Furthermore, the traditional MCAS schedule prohibits flexibility for vacation alternatives due to the numerous test dates throughout the school year. In particular, March is a month of heavy testing thus directly negating the March vacation recommendation by DESE.

We ask that DESE take action to empower districts to have more flexibility in choosing the best course for our students and families. Your comments and suggestions are welcome as we try to move forward with this issue in our district.

Yours in Education,

The Acton Boxborough Regional School District Committee

File: KDB

PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW
FIRST READ 3/3/16 *

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee members are public servants, and as such, their meetings, discussion, and records are a matter of public information. Some exceptions will be made for exemptions specifically outlined in the Open Meeting Law to be discussed in Executive Session. The School Committee supports the right of the people to know about the programs and services of their schools and will make every reasonable effort to disseminate information. All reasonable requests for information will be acted on fairly, completely and expeditiously.

The official minutes of the Committee, its written policies and regulations, and its financial records will be open for inspection at the Office of the Superintendent by any citizen desiring to examine them during hours when the office is open. No records pertaining to individual students or staff members will be released for inspection by the public or any unauthorized persons by the Superintendent or other persons responsible for the custody of confidential files. The exception to this will be information about an individual employee (or student) that has been authorized in writing for release by the employee (or student, or student's parent).

Each building administrator is authorized to keep parents and others in the particular school's community informed about the school's program and activities.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 66:10; ~~39:23B~~

CROSS REFS.: BEDG, Minutes GBJ, Personnel Records JRA, Student Records

** Minor edits for regionalization only*

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGAL STATUS
First Readings 11/7/13 and 3/3/16

(NOTE: Not voted at meeting on 11/21/13 because SC asked about "Established by law")

State law provides that:

~~Every town at its annual meeting shall in every year when the term of office of any incumbent expires, and except when other provision is made by law or by charter, choose by ballot from its registered voters the following town officers for the following terms of office:~~

~~... Three or more members of the School Committee for terms of not more than three years ...~~

~~The School Committee is the governing board of the town's public school system. Although it functions as a duly elected Committee of town government, the School Committee has, unlike other town boards, autonomous and absolute authority within limitations established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to carry out the educational policies of the state and guide the educational process.~~

The School Committee is the governing board of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District. Although the Committee functions as a duly elected committee of local government(s), Massachusetts General Laws state that each public school system will be governed by a school committee.

The School Committee possesses all powers and duties conferred upon it by state law. The Committee alone may determine policies, approve a budget, and employ a Superintendent to implement their directions for the education of the children of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District.

Members of the School Committee shall have no authority over school affairs as individuals. They shall have authority, within the General Laws, over school affairs when they serve as a legal body.

Regional school districts are created in accordance with state law and the Regional Agreement approved by the member towns. The Acton-Boxborough Regional District School Committee consists of eleven members, seven from the Town of Acton and four from the Town of Boxborough. At the annual town elections, the Town of Acton shall elect two or three members to the Committee, and the Town of Boxborough shall elect one or two members to the Committee, each to serve three-year terms.

~~Established by law~~

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:1, and 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the General Laws of Massachusetts Relating to School Committees
M.G.L. 71:14B, 71:16A

CROSS REFS.: AA, School District Legal Status
AA-E Regional Agreement between the towns of Acton & Boxborough, MA
BBA, School Committee Powers and Duties

Chapter 70 Resolution

The success of Massachusetts' economy is a result of dedicated commitment and strategic priorities. Beginning as the birthplace of public education in America and advancing to the 21st century, student achievement in Massachusetts is frequently cited, by various academic measurements, as the best in the nation. This enduring tenet is a key ingredient to the strength of our State's economy. Strong public schools provide the foundation for successful college students as well as a feeder system for bright, innovative future leaders in the workplace. If we do not take active steps to preserve our commitment to public education, other states will be glad to gain a marginal advantage. After acknowledging that the 1993 funding formula for Chapter 70 contains unrealistic and outdated factors, the Massachusetts Legislature commissioned a study group known as the Foundation Budget Review Commission in 2014. The task was to determine the cost of providing an adequate education in current times in Massachusetts. The results were released in two phases, one in June 2015 and the other this past November, and they confirmed what educators and local officials have long known to be true: the cost of educating the students of Massachusetts is severely underestimated by the existing funding formula.

As we prepare local FY17 budgets, the Suburban Coalition urges each town's Board of Selectmen, School Committee and Finance Committee or Advisory Committee to adopt the attached resolution that simply asks the Legislature and the Governor to fund the recommendations of the Foundation Budget Review Commission. Especially during the recession, the cost of an adequate education has disproportionately fallen on local taxpayers and the resulting strains on local budgets are not sustainable within the limits of Proposition 2 ½. The Suburban Coalition has chosen this specific area of focus because Chapter 70 is generally the single largest contributor to the bottom line of cities or towns' Cherry Sheets. Additionally, too many cities and towns have struggled with "minimum aid increases" for five or more years, and the timeliness of the Foundation Budget Review Commission's reports makes this the ideal budget cycle. With the release of the Governor's budget proposal, it has become clear that we need to stand together if we hope to see progress with Local Aid. We would like to track our progress, so please alert us at DorothyPresser@suburbancoalition.org after your boards have voted to send the attached resolution (**see below**) to Beacon Hill.

Sincerely,
Dorothy Presser
President

Reference documents on our position:

Foundation Budget Review Commission Final Report <http://www.mass.gov/legis/journal/desktop/2015/fbrc.pdf>

"Cutting Class: Underfunding the Foundation Budget's Core Education Program", Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center http://www.massbudget.org/reports/pdf/Cutting_Class.pdf.

"Our Communities and Our Commonwealth: Partners for Progress and Prosperity", Massachusetts Municipal Association http://www.mma.org/images/stories/NewsArticlePDFs/mma_news/mma_partnership_principles.pdf

"A Preview of the FY17 Budget", Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center http://massbudget.org/reports/pdf/FY17BudgetPreview_Final_1-21-2016.pdf

"Building a Strong Economy: The Role of Education, Transportation and Tax Policy", Massachusetts Budget & Policy Center <http://massbudget.org/reports/pdf/building%20a%20strong%20economy.pdf>

Massachusetts Municipal Association Testimony <http://www.mma.org/advocacy-mainmenu-100/letters-to-state-leaders/14517-mma-testimony-to-joint-committee-on-ways-and-means-urging-support-for-key-municipal-and-school-aid-programs>

Resolution Calling for Full Funding of the Foundation Budget Review Commission's Recommendations

Whereas the Massachusetts Foundation Budget Review Commission identified two areas (employee health insurance and special education) where the Massachusetts Foundation Budget significantly understates the true cost of educating students in the Commonwealth and has failed to keep pace with rising costs;

Whereas this underfunding means the cost of providing a quality education has increasingly been borne by local communities, most often at the expense of other vital municipal operations;

Whereas investing in education today leads to higher incomes, and thus less investment in police, prisons, subsidized health care, low income housing, welfare, etc. in the future;

Whereas state and local economies are most effectively strengthened "by investing in education and increasing the number of well-educated workers."

Therefore Be It Resolved that the [insert name of local governing board here] calls on the Massachusetts Legislature and the Governor of Massachusetts to fully fund and adopt the recommendations of the Foundation Budget Review Commission in the immediate future.

Rationale: The Foundation Budget Review Commission (FBRC) was established by the Legislature in the FY16 budget and was charged with examining the Foundation Budget (Chapter 70) formula. The formula was first established as part of the Education Reform legislation in 1993 and has not been thoroughly reviewed or updated since that time. The FBRC found that the current formula understates costs significantly in two areas: Employee Health Insurance and Special Education.

If the recommendations of the FBRC had been implemented in the FY16 budget, state funding for education would have been about \$500 million more than it was. However, if Chapter 70 reflected the true cost of education, the number would be closer to \$2 billion.

Spending by school districts over the required Net School Spending amounts has increased, as a whole, for more than a decade, indicating that communities are using local property taxes and diverting funding from other portions of municipal budgets to fund their schools. In FY14, the total spending above Foundation in the state was \$1.7 billion. At the same time, the state's commitment to municipal aid has declined. Since 2001, unrestricted local aid has been cut by 43%. The net effect is a combination of cuts to local and school services and an increasing reliance on the regressive property tax.

The evidence overwhelmingly establishes the correlation between a well-educated workforce and higher income individuals. States that invest more in education have a higher paid workforce; also, states that increase the level of education of their population see greater productivity and higher wages over time. The link can then easily be made between higher paid individuals and less reliance on various forms of government assistance, as well as lower rates of crime.

A state's high school and college attainment rates are important factors in the state's overall economic strength. Additionally, investments in education can have significant long-term impacts on state and local economies, as well-educated individuals tend to stay relatively local and contribute tax dollars to the state and municipality in which they reside. In general, the taxes paid over time by these individuals are substantially higher than the cost of their public education.

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee - DRAFT
 Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
 16 Charter Road
 Acton, MA 01720
 978-264-4700
www.abschools.org

March 17, 2016

Mr. Sean Rourke
 District Director
 Office of State Representative Jennifer E. Benson
 State House, Room 42
 Boston, MA 02133

Dear Mr. Rourke:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide Representative Benson's office with comments on the governor's budget. In September, two of our members met with Rep. Benson to talk about the coming year and reported back to the committee that Rep. Benson understood the need of all school districts for the support of the Commonwealth through Chapter 70 and other sources, so there was no need to ask. We appreciate Rep. Benson's ongoing support and understanding.

However, we would like to take you up on your recent invitation to comment on the Governor's budget. In the table below we have summarized several budgetary line items for our district. For each line item, the table shows the estimated increase for FY17. These line items are based on current estimates.

Table 1. Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (ABRSD) FY 17 Budget Estimate

FY17 Budget Line Item	Increase (%)
Salaries, Teaching	3.4
Health Insurance	4.2
Middlesex County Retirement	6.4
SpEd Transportation	19.5
Utilities	11.9

These line items represent nearly 60% of our total budget estimate of FY17. On the whole, our FY17 budget increase is 3.46%. This budget reflects a priority that we have placed on the social and emotional wellbeing of the students in our district. It is also responsive to the dramatic increases in the high needs populations. This is our responsibility and we take it seriously.

We contrast these projected expenditures with certain projected revenue sources that come from the Governor's proposed budget as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2, FY 17 Governor's Budget (ABRSD Revenue Sources)

FY17 Budget Line Item	Increase (%)
Chapter 70 ¹	0.16
Circuit Breaker ²	0.00000037
English Language Acquisition ³	-43.7

In the Governor's Line Item Summary, the statement in the comment column describing the Chapter 70 line item was the following: "Increased funding to meet projected need". This statement is clearly false. The data collected by the Foundation Budget Review Commission indicated that the need is increasing at a much high rate. No comment was provided with regard to the Circuit Breaker – just as well, given the nature of the "increase". The comment describing the English Language Acquisition line item was as follows: "Decreased funding to meet projected need". In the face of data collected by the Foundation Budget Review Commission, this statement is clearly not supported by facts. The Governor's budget also level funded Regional Transportation, despite rising costs among school districts.

While we will continue to meet our responsibilities as best we can as a local political body, we would like to pass on our grave disappointment with the governor's proposed budget. We had hoped that the Commonwealth would have been more willing to stand with us shoulder-to-shoulder to meet these responsibilities. Instead, we feel we are standing alone.

We would like to applaud the work of the Foundation Budget Review Commission and look forward to the legislature addressing the report recommendations relative to needed adjustments to the foundation budget, particularly as they relate to health care, special education, ELL and student mental health.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the governor's budget.

Sincerely,

Members of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

¹ This increase represents the increase to the ABRSD. Other districts received more. State-wide, the increase is still only 1.6%.

² This roughly \$200 million line item was increased by exactly \$1.00.

³ This line item was decreased in spite of a preponderance of data from around the Commonwealth that the population of students in this category is rapidly increasing.

ALG Minutes, Feb. 25 2016

Present: Bart Wendell, facilitator; Kristina Rychlik & Paul Murphy, SC; Margaret Busse & Mike Majors, FC; Katie Green & Peter Berry, BoS; Steve Ledoux, Glenn Brand, Marie Altieri & Steve Barrett, staff

Audience: Janet Adachi & Franny Osmond, BoS; Brian McMullen & Clare Jeannotte, staff; Peter Ashton, Charlie Kadlec & Bob Ingram.

Extra Info: FY15 Municipal Reserve replenishment; MV Excise tax amounts in ALG plan: six year data on MV Excise tax; new ALG plan; FC FY 17 budget plan; poster for baby sitting at town meeting

Minutes accepted

2. Nothing to report on update for FY 16

3 & 4 Spreadsheet and discussion of reserves [during the course of the discussion it was noted that these two agenda items were melding into one]

Steve B: After last meeting we had a \$293k positive position with the tax levy reduced by \$603k. At Margaret's request, I have developed the sheet for municipal reserve replenishment. The sub total is \$1.9m. The breakdown is: FY 15 turn-back \$197k; Closed encumbrances/articles \$428k; DOR free cash, statutory adjustment; FY 15 Miscellaneous revenue \$259k; FY 15 MV exercise greater than budgeted \$232k; FY15 local receipts greater than budgeted \$352k; FY15 Transfers (Nursing/COA close outs) \$111k.

SB: The Miscellaneous revenue, excise tax and local receipts can't be budgeted higher based on DOR regulations. The closed encumbrances can vary greatly; we have a list of the articles and how much has been used and if the articles may be closed. There is also the action of repurposing some of the articles which has to be passed by Town Meeting. The Nursing/COA is one-time revenue from the close out of the enterprise funds.

Steve also showed the variations in the MV excise taxes: FY15 \$3,231,930; FY14 \$3,003,229; FY 13 \$2,714,651; FY 12 \$2,559,200; FY 11 \$2,599,291; FY10 \$2,514,503. To date this year the amount is \$2,717,000 and another payment is expected. The estimates for the excise tax being carried in the ALG plan: FY 16 \$3,100,000; FY 17 \$3,223,000; FY 18 \$3,287,000; FY 19 \$3,353,000.

Steve L: people are buying cars now but the tax depreciates quickly and people do not buy new cars every year. So it's best to be conservative.

SB: any time after June 30 we are allowed to run a deficit in some accounts while we wait for the state reimbursement. This has happened in the rail trails where we have to wait for the state and federal reimbursements. It also happens under CH 90 (highway) where we have to wait for the state payments. We cannot get paid unless we first spend the money.

Margaret thanked Steve for his work and taking the mystique out of how funds are replenished. Is there a way to take a ten year average of the replenishment numbers to see if there is logic or a trend? Even though there are variables, we can take into account recessions, there must be some methodology.

SB: there was a working group on the reserves tab. We took a three-year average and came out with \$2M

Kristina (looking at the replenishment sheet) we can't plan on the last four—it's not level every year and the numbers can be quite different.

SB: there is a portion we can plan for

Margaret: what level can we put out for next year? We started with \$250k then it went to \$600k and now its \$900k

SB: we don't do close outs every year. It is higher this year. The bottom three is a reflection of the economy.

Marie: we may not get what we need with a 10-year average. Remember there has been a close-out of NESWC. There is the Ch. 70 money that was increasing but now is flat. We also had the Federal stimulus monies that we no longer have; we didn't spend it all in one year but spread it out. Keep in mind that we used \$2.6M but we have \$1.9M replenishment for a net use of reserves of \$700k.

Katie: before the region, the APS monies came back into reserves. Now they go into E&D. A 10-year look back trying to factor in the APS numbers would really complicate things

Margaret: There should be an adjustment. Marie is saying it's Ok to use the \$2.6M because we got the \$1.9M. I'm not sure if the 10-year average is the right thing to do, I'll have to think about it. Perhaps we can do the average leaving out the unpredictable. Let's budget so we will know the numbers

SB: it's taken me 20 years to get my mind around this whole thing. We need to recognize the management team has kept us going with these very complex issues in municipal finance.

Bart: Is everyone all right with the numbers: The \$2.6M and the replenishment numbers?

Katie: The FC voted on Tuesday and now we have another plan.

Mike: I originally submitted (the FY17 budget plan handed out as extra info). But then withdrew the plan. We did put out what the FC was thinking and given direction.

Katie: you may or may not have discussed this on Tuesday but regardless it is not compatible with the ALG plan.

Mike: we had a lively discussion we identified the SC savings and the issue of reserve (use). We want to limit reserve use to \$1.3 which being realistic will cause net positive to go negative. We by continual cost cutting and lessen the use of want to get away from the dependency on reserves and come up with a structurally balanced budget. We should address the negative net position by cost cutting and revenue enhancement.

Katie: The Town cut \$200k and used the \$985 to the tax levy. This was agreed to on Monday. The board (BoS) is comfortable with \$125 health care savings. There is a general sense that we could move that up to \$200k. We did not talk about limiting the reserve use to \$1.3M in the out years.

Peter went through the FC percentage numbers in the reserves tab and noted that the level in FY 18 is 6.4% and does not fall below the [DOR] recommended 5% level.

Katie: why are you only using the town's \$900k for replenishment and not using the school's E&D?

Marie: I have been trying to understand why the percentages from the FC are lower than the ALG plan. I think we need to include E&D in reserves because the reserves percentage is a percentage of all expenses including the regional assessment. It does not make sense to include it as an expense and not as a revenue source.

Marie: the ALG plan in FY 19 has the level at 4.55% and this is a very conservative budget---but then I read in the FC statement that it falls to 3%. We have has a conversation about taking E&D out of reserves; so you are left with the town budget while 2/3s is the AB assessment. So you have to do free cash as a percentage of the town's budget.

Katie: why not include both (E&D & Towns Free cash) ---we are not using the \$2M in reserves to balance the town budget.

Paul: are there two separate spreadsheets?

Katie: the FC proposal cuts the town spending by \$200k.

Paul: I think the FC needs a third point: the reserves have not been depleted

Steve L: Sudbury uses almost all of their reserves.

Bart: Two questions: there are questions about this AM's document from the FC; is this separate from the original agreement?

Katie: There is a tacit agreement that we can reduce \$200k, but using only \$1.3M in FY 18 & 19 will result in larger deficits which we have not discussed.

Kristina: There are a number of things: the FC has one set of assumptions while the ALG is using another. Why the use of \$1.3M in the future; I wonder how the FC is projecting the reserves and does not seem to project the replenishments. There is the challenge to the school committee of recent realities and I'm wondering if we could come out somewhere in the middle.

Bart: What does that middle look like?

Kristina The \$1.3M is too low. Maybe it could be OK if we have more replenishment0---that means more that the \$900k.

Margaret: I'm comfortable using the E&D as part of the reserves the rating agencies look at both the schools and the town.

SB: The rating agencies look to the long term. They are not interested in the percentage being five or ten. In the conference call they look at per capita income; the ability of the town to repay; at the deferential in the demographics. They don't add up the E&D and free cash. They are more interested in our collection rates which are at 99.9%---that really carries the day. They look at the overall valuation and the SF tax rate.

Margaret: when they look at overall reserves, do they just look at the Town?

SB: They do compute free cash [which includes stability funds] and divide that by spending.

Margaret: the schools have had a negative outlook which has caused a scare. We need to know the terms of their evaluation: whether they just look at town's reserves or the overall. This gets us back to the mystic around reserves. We have never used the [total in the budget] amount of reserves. I share the FC's concern that we are over budgeting in order to be conservative. Being too conservative is one dimension of conservative budgeting..

Katie: look at the replenishment sheet. How can you say that a return of less than \$200k on a budget of \$30M is over budgeting? There are other areas that are not spent so we have the range of \$2.5M - \$1.3M. There is the problem where we cannot show a revenue increase [by DOR's regulations or because we just do not know]

Bart: are people OK with the \$1.3M for now?

PB: I'm not comfortable that we cannot come to a consensus

Mike: our focus has been on the use and level of reserves. But the more important is the tax bill and I have great concerns for FY 17.

Katie: we have put budget savings in to lower the tax rate.

Bart: can we get an agreement on the \$1.3 for today and not for the future?

Katie asked Steve B. to show the "live spread sheet"

Marie: If we move the reserve use to \$1.3M it basically means that we will be showing higher deficits in FY 18 & FY1.

Steve showed the living spreadsheet, which showed what Marie predicted.

There was a suggestion that the decrease be more gradual starting with \$1.9M for FY 18 and \$1.3M for FY 19. The concern was the recapturing of the "lost" levy would cause too great increases in the tax rate where a gradual approach would be the better course.

Paul questioned the origin of the \$1.3M number again reiterating his position that the FC was just talking about numbers and was ignoring the services and needs that these numbers covered. He added that the budget was so tight that "we are setting ourselves up for a surprise---one tragedy. He was opposed to using the \$1.3M number.

Katie reiterated the BoS position that they could cut the \$200k but not the \$1.3 figure. That would mean a cut in services.

Bart: is there an agreement that show the use of the \$1.3M in the outlying years along with the deficits?

Marie: we may be sending the wrong sort of message we do not want to dis incentivize people from doing turn backs.

Margaret: we need to see the delta between replenishments and the reserves. There is good news that there were turn backs. The FC wants to retain 5% level and not over tax the people. Our board wants a broad brush approach to reduce overall spending and reduce costs to taxpayers. We don't want to be aggressive in the use of reserves. We feel it's not appropriate to use the reserves while taxing to the maximum percentage.

Katie and Kristina agree to take the numbers back to their respective boards.

Margaret: the \$1.3M was to be the start of a conversation.

Bart: question on the table: is it worth taking this back to the boards and seriously considering the compromises being asked by the FC?

Mike: \$1.9Mv\$1.3M---no issue

There is the press of time. The SC will have a meeting on March 3. The warrant needs to go to press on March 15 (the week of) the next ALG is March 10.

Bart: so the final decision will have to be made then.

7. Baby sitting

Kristina has arranged for free babysitting during Town Meeting. She asked that the ad flyer be printed in the Town Warrant.

Steve L: agreed

6. Public

Charlie Kadlec: Don't be concerned about FY 18 & 19. Only the three boards are interested in this, no one at Town Meeting cares. The thing you need to put on the spreadsheet is the effect on the taxes.

Next meeting is March 10

Adjourned 9 AM

Ann Chang

Acton Leadership Group Meeting

March 15, 2016

7:30 AM

Room 204

Acton Town Hall

Peter Ashton Facilitating

1. Approval of Meeting Minutes, February 25, 2016 All
2. Update on FY 16 All
3. Revenues and Expenditures Steve Ledoux
Glen Brand
4. Review of Spreadsheet Steve Barrett
Marie Altieri
5. Discussion on Use of Reserves in FY 18 and FY 19 All
6. Public Comment
7. Adjourn



Beth Petr <bpetr@abschools.org>

FW: ALG plan March 10 2016.xlsx

1 message

Stephen Barrett <sbarrett@acton-ma.gov>
To: Acton Leadership Group <ALG@acton-ma.gov>
Cc: Peter Ashton <peter.ashton16@gmail.com>

Tue, Mar 8, 2016 at 10:50 PM

Good Evening:

ALG plan for Thursday March 10 attached:

- Increases FY17 untaxed levy capacity to \$985k
- Reflects Acton BOS 3/7/16 \$200k reduction in total FY17 spending
- FY17 reserve use \$2.54m
- Estimated FY17 SFR tax increase = 3.55%

FY18 and FY19 reserve use at \$2.6m

See everyone Thursday morning.
Thanks,

Steve B.



ALG plan March 10 2016.xlsx
245K

NEW ALG Plan

	<u>Tax Recap FY15</u>	<u>Tax Recap FY16</u>			<u>Projection FY17</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>Projection FY18</u>	<u>Projection FY19</u>
Municipal Funding Sources:									
Tax Levy (excluding debt exclusion)	\$ 70,450,000	\$ 73,348,000	85.27%	4.1%	\$ 76,623,952	\$3,275,952	4.5%	80,446,675	83,355,342
State Aid	\$ 1,194,000	\$ 1,476,000	1.72%		\$ 1,528,090	\$52,090	3.5%	1,559,543	1,591,781
Local Receipts	\$ 4,702,000	\$ 4,800,000	5.58%		\$ 4,840,386	\$40,386	0.8%	4,887,415	4,941,616
Debt Exclusion	\$ 2,868,000	\$ 2,835,000	3.30%		\$ 2,817,959	-\$17,041	-0.6%	2,768,612	2,538,007
SBAB Reimbursement	\$ 923,000	\$ 923,000	1.07%		\$ 923,000	\$0	0.0%	923,000	923,000
Add: Town Reserves	\$ 1,653,282	\$ 2,641,000	3.07%	59.7%	\$ 2,545,314	\$ (95,686)	-3.6%	2,600,000	2,600,000
Acton Total Funding Sources	\$ 81,790,282	\$ 86,023,000	100%	5.2%	\$ 89,278,701	\$ 3,255,701	3.8%	93,185,245	95,949,747

	<u>Regional Actual</u>	<u>Table 6</u>			<u>Regional Budget</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>	<u>Regional Budget</u>	<u>Regional Budget</u>
ABRSD Funding Sources:									
State AID Ch.70	\$ 14,254,476	\$ 14,393,376			\$ 14,531,276	\$137,900	1.0%	14,635,656	14,737,736
Transportation	\$ 1,353,855	\$ 1,266,283			\$ 1,190,000	-\$76,283	-6.0%	1,289,167	1,289,167
Regional Bonus Aid	\$ 136,900	\$ 111,200			\$ 74,000	-\$37,200	-33.5%	37,000	-
Other Revenue	\$ 25,810	\$ 34,287			\$ 27,683	-\$6,604	-19.3%	27,683	27,683
Excess & Deficiency	\$ 300,000	\$ 200,000			200,000	\$0	0.0%	200,000	200,000
Total	\$ 16,071,041	\$ 16,005,146			\$ 16,022,959	\$17,813	0.1%	\$ 16,189,506	\$ 16,254,586

Allocation to Budgets

Municipal Spending	\$ 31,341,000	\$ 31,955,000	2.0%		\$ 32,656,604	\$ 701,604	2.20%	\$ 33,799,585	\$ 34,982,571
ABRSD Assessment	\$ 49,690,145	\$ 53,171,000	7.0%		\$ 55,547,097	\$ 2,376,097	4.47%	\$ 58,157,810	\$ 60,891,227
Minuteman Assessment	\$ 758,000	\$ 897,000	18.3%		\$ 1,075,000	\$ 178,000	19.8%	\$ 1,175,000	\$ 1,275,000
Total Acton Spending	\$ 81,789,145	\$ 86,023,000	5.2%		\$ 89,278,701	\$ 3,255,701	3.8%	\$ 93,132,395	\$ 97,148,798
Net Position	\$ 1,137	\$ -			\$ 0	\$ 0		\$ 52,850	\$ (1,199,051)

Annual Contributions Towards

Long-Term OPEB liability	\$ 1,100,000	\$ 1,249,000			\$ 1,400,000			\$ 1,500,000	\$ 1,500,000
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Town of Acton - Tax Impact

	<u>FY15</u>	<u>FY16</u>	<u>FY17</u>
Tax Rate	\$ 19.05	\$ 19.23	\$ 19.34
SF Value	\$ 531,639	\$ 539,896	\$ 556,093
SF Tax Bill	\$ 10,127	\$ 10,384	\$ 10,752
% Change in SF Tax Bill	3.0%	2.5%	3.55%



MASS/MASBO Position Paper – Legislative Alert March 10, 2016

While the Governor's FY2017 budget provides an increase of \$72 million over FY2016, we believe it is far short of that which is necessary to address significant challenges faced by many districts in the Commonwealth. For background information on this topic, we recommend reading the report *Analyzing the Governor's FY2017 Budget*, issued on February 5, 2016 by the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center (MassBudget; see www.massbudget.org).

To put the above increase in perspective, \$72 million represents only a 1.6% increase over FY2016, a year in which Chapter 70 aid had seen a \$111 million increase. The majority of districts received only a minimum aid adjustment of \$20 per student. Despite the long-awaited report of the Foundation Budget Review Commission (FBRC, on which both MASS and MASBO representatives served), there was no attempt to implement any of its recommendations.

Therefore, we are advocating for additional education funding, and hereby suggest that district officials contact their legislators to voice support – specifically addressing any or all of these five identified priorities:

1. Hold Harmless funding for Low Income formula changes in the Foundation Budget

As you may know, the Governor's budget uses a new method for determining low income enrollment in the calculation of the Foundation Budget (FB), and – to offset the resulting lower headcount (in some cases quite significant) – increases the FB per student base. According to MassBudget, "While these changes combine to increase support for low-income students (a statewide FB increase of \$55.5 million, or 4.5%), this proposal nonetheless generates less Chapter 70 aid for some districts than they otherwise would have received."¹

This new approach results in "winners and losers" in terms of additional state aid; we believe a more equitable method should be used. One possibility is to raise the Low Income per student allotment (presented in deciles) to a level where no district's FB will decrease as a result of the change in headcount method. Another is to "consider carrying over FY2016 free and reduced meal percentages as a temporary stopgap while continuing for another year (DESE's) work to better count low-income students under the new measure."²

2. Raise Minimum Aid to \$50 per student

Nearly 250 districts (over 75% statewide) receive additional \$20 per student aid in the Governor's budget. This amount should be raised to \$50, but realistically to at least \$40 per student (a level last seen in FY13).

3. Increase the Inflation Factor used in determining the FY2017 Foundation Budget

In FY2010, the final budget reflected a lower FB inflation adjustment (3.04%) than what was required by statute (6.75%), as discussed in the FBRC report. "A correction that suspended the statutory cap results in an adjustment of 3.6% in FY16".³ The Governor's FY2017 Chapter 70 proposal uses a (negative) 0.22% inflation adjustment in the FB. Negative overall inflation may validly reflect the significantly reduced cost of energy, but is not indicative of most cost factors in public education. Thus, an opportunity is presented to restore the understated inflation adjustment from FY2010 and normalize the true effect on the FB.

4. Begin the phased-in implementation of the recommendations in the FBRC report

Based on compelling testimony received by the FBRC, and supported by data showing the actual spending by FB category of school districts in the Commonwealth, a large number of them are not spending at FB for Instructional Services. In some cases – especially among gateway communities – this gap between actual spending and foundation (legally, the minimum necessary to provide adequate education) is huge.

Since its adoption under Ed Reform in 1993, the FB has not kept pace with actual costs relating to benefits (largely health insurance) and special education services. As a result, districts that spend at or near FB *in the aggregate* (as legally required) spend far less on instruction than provided in the FB. For example, in the Worcester Public Schools, that gap is \$35 million or (as determined on an FTE basis) 550 teachers. The recommendations of the FBRC, chief among them to significantly increase the allotments for benefits and SPED, should commence its multi-year phase-in process. See the full FBRC report at www.mass.gov.

5. **Increase reimbursement for regional transportation to 80 percent**

The Governor's budget level-funds reimbursement to regional districts. This state obligation (under MGL, C71, S16C) should be funded at no less than 80% to provide fiscal stability and incentives to regionalization.

Notes:

¹ *Proposed Low-Income Student Changes Would Have Varied Chapter 70 Impact*; MassBudget, February 17, 2016

² *Ibid.*

³ *Final Report*; Foundation Budget Review Commission, October 30, 2015